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Legislative
Assembly
of Ontario



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législative
de l'Ontario

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(Hansard)**

No. 89

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(Hansard)**

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Thursday
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Jeudi
1^{er} juin 2017

Speaker: Honourable Dave Levac
Clerk: Todd Decker

Président : L'honorable Dave Levac
Greffier : Todd Decker



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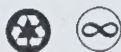
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 1 June 2017

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 1^{er} juin 2017

The House met at 0900.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning.
Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ANTI-RACISM ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 CONTRE LE RACISME

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 31, 2017, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures / Projet de loi 114, Loi prévoyant des mesures contre le racisme.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister Coteau.

Hon. Michael Coteau: It's a real honour for me to stand here in this House today as we move third reading of Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures, which I'll refer to as the Anti-Racism Act.

I want to start by acknowledging our indigenous past here in the province of Ontario, and recognize our First Nations, our Métis, our Inuit heritage here in this province and country, and in addition to that, recognize that we're on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit. People often say this at the beginning of a speech these days. In fact, the first time I ever heard anyone say that was listening to the Premier speak years ago, but I think it's especially important today, considering that we're talking about racism here in the province of Ontario.

Over the last year, I've had the opportunity to travel across this province and to talk to people face to face. As I've mentioned before, I've probably interacted with over 4,000 people during these consultations. I also had smaller meetings with different groups and also meetings one-on-one with people. And when we talk about racism here in the province of Ontario, there is no question that it exists. There is no question that there are different forms of racism that exist here in Ontario, including systemic racism. Some people have asked me, "What is systemic racism? What does it mean?" The best way I can explain it is, systemic racism is racism that may be institutionalized within an organization. You may have folks who do not necessarily have racist tendencies; however, the system is set up in such a way where it doesn't allow people to reach their full potential. My job is to look for ways to remove barriers that exist to eliminate racism.

Last month, I was at the Economic Club of Canada speaking about racism. It was the first time in the history of the Economic Club of Canada that they had a speaker

come in to talk about racism. I made an argument. I made an argument that fighting racism is a good thing to do because it's the right thing to do. When we talk about our morals and ethics, our values as Canadians, it's the right thing to do. But I also talked about the economic side of racism. I talked about the fact that in the United States, it's estimated that it costs the United States about \$1 trillion in lost revenue each year. The government alone loses about \$100 billion in costs associated with systemic racism, and then there's also a monetary value that's lost through taxation.

Here alone, in Ontario, there's no question in my mind that the more we remove the barriers that exist that are caused by systemic racism, the better our society is going to do.

I want to take a moment to talk about some of the things we're doing as a government to build a fairer Ontario. I'm sure that someone in the opposition might think, "Why is he talking about things like free tuition or having a \$15 minimum wage? What does that have to do with systemic racism?" But I would have to argue that what we're trying to do here in the province of Ontario is make sure, at the end of the day, that people have a fair chance here in Ontario: that they have the ability to reach their potential and to really capture the benefits that this beautiful place called Ontario has to offer. There's no question in my mind that every single person in this Legislature agrees that Ontario is a beautiful place with boundless opportunity. We've been very fortunate, on this side of the world, to live in a place like Ontario. We know that we need to make sure that we can continue to have that place we call home.

As a government, we've been looking to do things to make sure that people can reach their full potential. Madam Speaker, we have proposed a \$15 minimum wage here in Ontario. We proposed that because we want people to be able to earn the right type of income that's aligned with the cost of living. We want to make sure that tuition is accessible to everyone. That's why we put in free tuition. That's why we put in a proposal in our budget that passed a new provision that if you're 24 or under, medication would be free from now on.

We did this because we want to make sure that people are set up for success here in Ontario. Eliminating racism is aligned with building a fair Ontario. I'm very proud of the fact that as a government, we've introduced the first type of legislation in this country that is set up to combat systemic racism, to fight racism. It's the first of its kind. It's the first piece of legislation I believe anywhere in this country that has been set up by a government to take on systemic racism.

I want to thank the members on this side of the House, and I also want to thank members on that side of the House as well. I know that the member from Brampton–Springdale put in a lot of work in the committee process to get us to this point. So I want to thank her. I also want to thank the member from Eglinton–Lawrence for the work that he did because this was a huge passion for him, to look for ways to set people up for success and to eliminate systemic racism.

I want to thank all members of this House, because we went right across the province. I was in Kitchener. I went to Windsor. I was in Ottawa. The members that joined me at those meetings listened first-hand to the stories from people about systemic racism. There are stories that I can't forget. I remember being in Thunder Bay. Thunder Bay today—there are a lot of challenges that are taking place in Thunder Bay. You can open up a paper and see that for yourself. But in Thunder Bay, one of the teachers that was there—and he was of European background. He stood up and spoke, and he talked about the way the school system was set up. He talked about how the system was set up based on agriculture and letting kids out during the summer so they can go back and work on farms, which is great if that's aligned to your livelihood. But he was saying to me that as a teacher, he noticed that the kids in northern Ontario who were indigenous were not coming in in the fall period and he didn't understand why they weren't coming. It was aligned to their traditional hunting period.

0910

So even our education system has been set up in such a way where it didn't take into account the livelihood of some of those communities in that region. Really, that's what systemic racism is all about: looking at the system and looking for ways to make sure that a young person—or a middle-aged person or an older person—can access the system in a way that's aligned to their culture and looking for ways to remove barriers that exist.

We heard stories from people about blatant, overt racism—in-your-face kind of racism—where people felt that their human rights have been disrespected. Some pretty tough, nasty, horrible words have been presented to people. We also heard about the overrepresentation of indigenous and black children in child welfare; the overrepresentation in our corrections of indigenous and black people, mainly males. We heard many different stories.

At the end of the day, the message that I got is that there is a lot of pain out there. There are a lot of people who are suffering. Again, I don't want anyone for a second not to understand that people do see Ontario as a great place. Even when they're placed in a situation where they've been presented with some form of racism, they still looked at Ontario as a great place, but they knew it could be a better place. What we're trying to do in this Legislature by developing this type of legislation, presenting it and having it be adopted is to build a better Ontario.

So we've been able to bring this bill forward—again, the first of its kind. The bill is quite unique. It has some

very unique things embedded in it. I want to take a moment just to talk about some of those things because I believe they're very important. They are necessary in order for us to go forward.

Within the legislation, it will recognize and back a three-year plan that we've put forward as the Anti-Racism Directorate to fight systemic racism. This plan itself is bigger than the directorate itself. It's a pretty important piece because it captures the work that is going to take place beyond the work of the directorate.

While I'm talking about the directorate, I'd like to recognize three of the individuals who are in the west gallery this morning who have put a lot of work into developing the directorate. Let's give them a big round of applause, folks.

Applause.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Thank you for being here. I know the rest of the team is going to be here for the vote later today, which we all hope passes, but thank you for being here today.

Today is a special day because we have Bill 114 and another bill that's coming from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services which will be presented, Bill 89. So today's a pretty big day in regard to legislation being proposed and going for third reading and hopefully being supported by all members of the Legislature.

If the bill does pass today, this legislation will establish a long-term plan to fight systemic racism here in Ontario. It mandates community engagement, and this is an important thing because I often hear criticism about the community engagement piece. When we went out there, there were some folks who were saying, "Why are you continuously engaging the community? Why are you doing this?" Some other folks would be saying, "You haven't done enough engagement."

There are folks out there who have been engaged; they've been engaged for years and years and years—10, 20, 30 years—from the Stephen Lewis report way back in the Bob Rae government to the Curling-McMurtry report on the roots of youth violence. People are exhausted when it comes to looking for ways to fight racism here in Ontario. The recommendations that have been made today are some of the same recommendations that have been made 30 years ago, 20 years ago. But there's a difference between what we're doing here today and what has happened in the past. The first thing, like I said, this is being backed by legislation.

This legislation mandates community engagement through multi-year strategic plans. It will obligate the minister responsible for this file to continuously go out there and engage community and ask them what they think, and have the ability to adjust that strategic plan based on the realities of today.

Now, I'll tell you what the changes have been in the last 15 years, the last 20 years, in comparison to 40 years ago. We all know that there have always been anti-Muslim sentiments that have been out there in the past. Islamophobia has always been there, but we know that after 9/11, Islamophobia has become one of the fastest-growing forms of hate here in this country.

We have a great Muslim community here in the city of Toronto. In fact, I know that most Muslims who live in Canada live in Ontario, and most of them reside in the GTA. We have a very strong Muslim community, a very prominent community, occupying some of the most influential positions in society—from lawyers to academics, academia, to members of provincial Parliament, to heads of universities.

We know that there are many folks in our communities, our neighbours, who are Muslim. Over the last 15 years the hate towards that community has increased. We've seen it. We're all aware of it. You can open up a paper and you can see those stories. We need to make sure that we continuously engage the public to ensure that our plans are reflective of what's happening out there.

I need to take a moment to talk about what has happened in the Jewish community. Anti-Semitism is one of those institutionalized—one of those forms of racism that exists, one of those forms of hate that exists, that has been here for a long time. We know that 30% of the hate crime that takes place in the city of Toronto is against our own Jewish community. We need to monitor this stuff. We know what's happening in the United States and around the world when it comes to hate.

In fact, last night before I was going to bed I was going through Twitter and LeBron James, the NBA star, found a hate word spray-painted in front of the gates to his home—had the N-word there. This week they found two nooses in front of the black museum of history in Washington.

Things are happening out there, and we need to monitor it. We need to continuously engage the community to figure out what they're thinking and what they're feeling. Are there forms of extremism that are taking place? We need to, as a responsible government, understand what's going on. So I'm proud to be part of a government that is going to continuously engage.

One of the most important pieces that we have in this legislation is the ability to collect disaggregated race-based data and mandate organizations to collect that type of information. There's an old saying, "No data, no problem, no solution."

Madam Speaker, I always drag you into these debates because we were at the school board when that debate took place around disaggregated data. It was something that as a school board we embraced and as former trustees we acknowledged we had to focus on. It was a good thing for the city of Toronto.

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In fact, now we look back 15 years later, or 10 years later—it was 2004, and then 2006 it was implemented, the first census. We look back, and it's interesting. At the Toronto District School Board back then, when Bruce Davis and myself moved that motion, we won by one vote. Now the world looks at Toronto and the country looks back at Toronto and the TDSB, and they say, "How did you do this? What does it look like?" It's something that everyone embraces, but it was a hard sell years ago.

So we're going to make sure that we put forward a plan to collect the right type of data so we can make better policy decisions to fight systemic racism here in the province of Ontario.

I'm aware that I have about 45 seconds left. I want to end by saying this: This piece of legislation is not very complex when you look at it at first glance. But when you start to dig deep and you figure out what it empowers government to do, it becomes a lot more complex, because it's multi-ministry and it goes beyond just the role of government, and goes out and looks for ways to work with community. I believe that this piece of legislation is one of the most significant pieces of legislation that, as a government, we could put forward.

I hope, at the end of the day, that all of us here in the Legislature can rise to the occasion and support this piece of legislation so we can end hate here in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 29, 2017, I am now required to put the question.

Ms. MacCharles has moved third reading of Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I believe we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding private bills.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The President of the Treasury Board has moved a motion. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Agreed? Agreed.

I recognize the President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I move that the orders for second and third reading of the following private bills shall be called consecutively and that the questions on the motions for second and third reading of the bills be put immediately without debate: Bills Pr56, Pr57, Pr58, Pr59, Pr60, Pr61, Pr62, Pr63, Pr64, Pr65, Pr66 and Pr67; and

That Mr. Bailey may move the motions for second and third reading of Bill Pr62 on behalf of Mr. Hillier; and

That Mr. Bisson may move the motions for second and third reading of Pr58 on behalf of Mr. Gates; and

That Mr. Potts may move the motions for second and third reading of Pr61 on behalf of Mr. Milczyn.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. Sandals has moved—

Interjections: Dispense.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Dispense? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

2053266 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2017

Ms. Hoggarth moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr56, An Act to revive 2053266 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

2053266 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2017

Ms. Hoggarth moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr56, An Act to revive 2053266 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

PROSPER LEGAL MANAGEMENT
INC. ACT, 2017

Mr. Delaney moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr57, An Act to revive Prosper Legal Management Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

PROSPER LEGAL MANAGEMENT
INC. ACT, 2017

Mr. Delaney moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr57, An Act to revive Prosper Legal Management Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

1049491 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2017

Mr. Bisson, on behalf of Mr. Gates, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr58, An Act to revive 1049491 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1049491 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2017

Mr. Bisson, on behalf of Mr. Gates, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr58, An Act to revive 1049491 Ontario Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

564539 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2017

Mr. Smith moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr59, An Act to revive 564539 Ontario Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

564539 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2017

Mr. Smith moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr59, An Act to revive 564539 Ontario Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

1476283 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2017

Mr. Bailey moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr60, An Act to revive 1476283 Ontario Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

1476283 ONTARIO LIMITED ACT, 2017

Mr. Bailey moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr60, An Act to revive 1476283 Ontario Limited.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

BRAISERY CHICKEN LTD. ACT, 2017

Mr. Potts, on behalf of Mr. Milczyn, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr61, An Act to revive Braisery Chicken Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

BRAISERY CHICKEN LTD. ACT, 2017

Mr. Potts, on behalf of Mr. Milczyn, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr61, An Act to revive Braisery Chicken Ltd.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

ROY WILSON REAL ESTATE INC.
ACT, 2017

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Hillier, moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr62, An Act to revive Roy Wilson Real Estate Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

ROY WILSON REAL ESTATE INC.
ACT, 2017

Mr. Bailey, on behalf of Mr. Hillier, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr62, An Act to revive Roy Wilson Real Estate Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

EAST YORK FOUNDATION ACT, 2017

Mr. Tabuns moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr63, An Act respecting The East York Foundation.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

EAST YORK FOUNDATION ACT, 2017

Mr. Tabuns moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr63, An Act respecting The East York Foundation.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

SIERRA CLEANING SOLUTIONS
INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Mangat moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr64, An Act to revive Sierra Cleaning Solutions Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

SIERRA CLEANING SOLUTIONS
INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Mangat moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr64, An Act to revive Sierra Cleaning Solutions Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

ST. POLA DRUGS INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Martow moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr65, An Act to revive St. Pola Drugs Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

ST. POLA DRUGS INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Martow moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr65, An Act to revive St. Pola Drugs Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

Mrs. Gila Martow: I just want to ask, on the last day, if there's an award for who gets the most private bills in from their riding?

SKAS AUTO SERVICES INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Martow moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr66, An Act to revive SKAS Auto Services Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Second reading agreed to.

SKAS AUTO SERVICES INC. ACT, 2017

Mrs. Martow moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr66, An Act to revive SKAS Auto Services Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

MILLAR WAJER HOLDINGS INC.
ACT, 2017

Mr. Yakabuski moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr67, An Act to revive Millar Wajer Holdings Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.
Second reading agreed to.

MILLAR WAJER HOLDINGS INC.
 ACT, 2017

Mr. Yakabuski moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr67, An Act to revive Millar Wajer Holdings Inc.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Orders of the day? I recognize the Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Hon. Michael Coteau: No further business, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): There being no further business, the House stands recessed until 10:30.

The House recessed from 0933 to 1030.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Michael Harris: I want to welcome to the Legislature Alex Overton. Alex has been an OLIP intern in my office for the last few months. It's a fantastic program. Alex, you've been tremendous in the office and we'll miss you. Good luck at law school. Thank you so much.

Speaker, thanks again for the OLIP program. It's a great program.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce some guests in the gallery. We've got the president of OPSEU, Smokey Thomas, here with us today; we've got Patti Markland from OPSEU; Miranda Ferrier, president of the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association; Katie Scott, the VP from the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association; Ed Arvelin, executive board member of OPSEU; Clarke Eaton, a political liaison from OPSEU; and we have our own Rosario Marchese here today as well.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Gee, thanks.
 Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Today is an important day. We've got two bills to vote on, Bill 89 and Bill 114. I'd like to welcome the men and women in the west gallery who are here from children and youth services and the Anti-Racism Directorate. I want to specifically recognize Deputy Minister Matthews and her team for being here today. Thank you for your hard work.

Mr. Toby Barrett: I wish to introduce two PSWs, Laurie Szakall and Michelle Gervais are in the visitors' gallery. They work at Edgewater Gardens in Dunnville.

And also a Port Dover girl, Kathleen Scott.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Our page captain today Gabriel Kotch is joined by his grandmother Barbara Shaw, grandfather Douglas Shaw, aunt Lorna McBrien and uncle Ed McBrien.

I would also like to welcome my OLIP intern—she's absolutely wonderful—Stephanie Lowe and her guest, Dr. Gary Gould.

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: I'm really pleased to have in the House and joining us today Ben Menka from my office. Joining him is Gillian Kiessling. Gillian is in my office as an intern, and I really appreciate all she does. Thank you very much.

Hon. Reza Moridi: It's a great pleasure to welcome my good friend and a former colleague, Dr. Amir Zangeneh and Ms. Fariba Zangeneh, who are visiting the House today. Please join me in welcoming them.

Mr. Lorne Coe: I'd like to welcome to the Legislature Rob Mackey, a constituent in my riding who participated in an agricultural round table that I hosted with the region of Durham this past month.

Mr. Granville Anderson: I would like to welcome Rowena M. Castaneda who is at Queen's Park today from the lovely riding of Durham with the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association. Welcome.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'd like to welcome all the PSWs here today, in particular Miranda Ferrier and Kathleen Scott from the Ontario PSW Association.

Hon. Indira Naidoo-Harris: It gives me great pleasure to introduce a couple of guests today. First I'd like to introduce my son, Galen Harris, today, who is joining us here at Queen's Park. Welcome to the House, Galen.

Also here are guests of page captain Kenna Smallegange: her parents, Catherine and Gerry Smallegange, and her brother Cormick Smallegange. Welcome to Queen's Park. It's great to have you here with us today.

Mr. Ted Arnott: I'm very pleased to welcome the personal support workers who are here today, as well as Joan Corradetti, who I'm told is here, from my riding. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Kathryn McGarry: I'd to welcome one of my constituents from Cambridge here today, who needs no further introduction: Miranda Ferrier, who is also the president of the Ontario PSW Association.

I also want to give a shout-out to all the PSWs who have joined us today. Thank you for the work you do.

Hon. Liz Sandals: I'd like to introduce, in the members' gallery, my interns for the summer: Jack Rubin and Jason Ianno.

I understand there are also some PSWs here from Guelph. Welcome.

Mr. Han Dong: It's my pleasure to introduce a good friend of mine. The president of the Toronto Chinese Business Association, Mr. Evan Chau, is with us in the members' gallery. He is here to host a reception in rooms 228 and 230, to promote the international dragon boat festival this year. I welcome all members to drop by and have some—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. The member from Perth—Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I'd like to introduce page Gracin's father, Wayne Black, who is here today at Queen's Park. Welcome.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: I would like to welcome Lisa Baker, who is here for OPSEU's personal support workers' lobby day. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Chris Ballard: I have three really important guests in the lobby today: my sister-in-law Sandra Ballard and my nieces Eryn Ballard and Alison Ballard. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Ms. Cindy Forster: I'd like to introduce Willy Noiles from the Ontario injured workers' association. He's here today for their rally for injured workers across the province.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Today is Injured Workers' Day in the province of Ontario, and I'd like to welcome members of the Injured Workers Advocacy Committee in Ontario. Please welcome them to Queen's Park.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I am delighted that two extraordinary members of my team have joined us today for question period: Brock Ceci, who worked in both London and Toronto and is off to the London School of Economics this fall; and the famous, incredible, extraordinary Judy Bell, my boss, who came to Queen's Park 30 years ago and is still with us. They're wonderful people.

I also see Chris Shantz, a former member of my team who has joined the public service.

Welcome to you all.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm delighted to introduce Nicholas Ferreira, who is sitting in the gallery. Nicholas is interning in my office for the summer. It's also his birthday today. Nicholas, it's good to see you.

Hon. Bill Mauro: I had an opportunity this morning to meet with OPSEU members as part of the PSW lobby day. Two members are here from Thunder Bay: Terry MacGillvary and Kim Pereira. I welcome them to Queen's Park.

Mr. Arthur Potts: I'm happy to introduce Chrissy Orr, a teacher at Neil McNeil high school, and her civics class, who are here today. Fidelitas in Arduis.

Mr. Granville Anderson: On behalf of my colleague Yvan Baker, I would like to welcome family members of Kate Winterton: her mother, Jennifer Krikorian, her uncle Jordan Winterton, and her aunt Jacqueline Krikorian. Welcome to Queen's Park. They're here today in the public gallery.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I would like to welcome a third member from OPSEU who joins us here today from Thunder Bay: Ed Arvelin. Welcome.

Hon. Chris Ballard: Another important guest in the gallery today is a great part of our team: Michael Donolo, a summer intern. Welcome, Michael.

Mr. Norm Miller: I'm pleased to introduce, in the public gallery, grade 7 and 8 students from Otter Lake Christian School, which is located just south of Parry Sound. They're here with their teacher Steve Weber.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further introductions? Further introductions?

As is the tradition and the convention of the Speaker to introduce former members—regardless of other members stepping on the Speaker's role—I would like to introduce, from Fort York in the 35th and 36th Parliaments and Trinity-Spadina in the 37th, 38th, 39th and 40th Parliaments, Monsieur Rosario Marchese.

1040

As the members know, I've started another tradition. On the first sitting day of each month, I'm inviting assembly employees who have retired or shortly will be retiring to be in the Speaker's gallery and have their service to the assembly recognized.

In that regard, I introduce Mary Saulig, director of information services in the information and technology services division. Mary, who will be retiring at the end of this month, is accompanied by several of her assembly colleagues. Together with them, please join me in thanking Mary for her service to the assembly and wishing her all the best in her retirement.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Introduction? The member from Davenport.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I just wanted to have this opportunity to welcome here to the House the mother and father of the page from Davenport. Page Matthew Harris has his parents, Angela Van Damme and Chris Harris, visiting here today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration on a point of order.

Hon. Laura Albanese: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent that members be permitted to wear pins in recognition of June 2, La Festa della Repubblica, which is Italy's national day, and the beginning of June, which is Italian Heritage Month.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Citizenship and Immigration is seeking unanimous consent to wear the pins. Do we agree? Agreed.

The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

Mr. Bill Walker: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It's my pleasure to introduce guests from Peninsula Shores District School. We have teacher Brenda Foster and her writers' craft class students: Bailey Ahrens, Isabel Alaman, Emma Barfoot, Dexter Bridge, Madison Broadbent, Maiya Burgess, Mikila Elliott, Julia Francoeur, Alex Madill, Faith McColeman, Liam Miller and Marta Perez. Welcome to Queen's Park.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Kitchener Centre.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: On a point of order, Speaker: I am delighted to say goodbye to our intern from OLIP, Rachel Nauta. She has served us really well. Thank you, Rachel.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their introductions and—I am looking to the member from Parry Sound-Muskoka for an introduction?

Mr. Norm Miller: Yes, thanks. I think I see my intern up in the public gallery: Hanna Forsyth, who has done an

amazing job in assisting me. I would hate to miss thanking her for all the great work she has done.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): My patience knows no bounds—for introductions only.

The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I also see my OLIP intern, Sara Gajic. I want to thank her for all the great work that she has done.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Seeing—and accepting—no further introductions, it is therefore time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson: My question is for the Premier. Speaker, either the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is unable to manage his own staff or he instructs them to circumvent existing rules. According to Global News, there is confirmation that between 2006 and 2014, his ministry chose to ignore thousands of noise and health complaints against industrial wind turbines. Just this past April, the minister shared how proud he is of his staff. But this is not a record to be proud of. Out of thousands of complaints, more than two thirds were ignored.

Will the Premier instruct this minister to do his job and investigate all of the complaints that he is receiving on industrial wind turbines from every corner of this province, especially those related to tonal noise?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the Minister of the Environment will want to comment.

I also know that we take concerns from community members very, very seriously on a full range of issues. I've spent an enormous amount of time over the years listening to and talking to people who are concerned about wind turbines. In fact, when I became the Premier we changed the rules about municipal input and the siting of wind turbines.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm reading the signals and I'm prepared to do it.
Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I know that the member opposite knows that under the current rules, municipalities have much more authority to indicate whether they are willing hosts or not—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London will come to order.

Supplementary? The member from Elgin–Middlesex–London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Back to the Premier: This government is forcing municipalities like Dutton Dunwich to accept some of the province's largest turbines. The

planned project in Dutton is the Strong Breeze Wind Project. They're forcing them, even though a poll conducted by the municipality showed that 84% of residents strongly oppose the project, as did the municipality.

Now we're hearing that the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has ignored thousands of noise complaints. Not only are the residents forced to accept wind turbines; they must now know that the ministry will not help them and will ignore all the problems caused by wind turbines.

This government has already admitted they do not need the energy that would be created by the Strong Breeze project in Dutton Dunwich. Will the Premier do the right thing and listen to the municipalities who say no and cancel the Strong Breeze Wind Project in Dutton Dunwich?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: First of all, I was not the minister in that period of time—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville.

Carry on, Minister.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Not only do we take these seriously; in the three years since I've been minister—and, I assume, in the period before—I have met with numerous people. We're working with the member from Huron–Bruce on the K2 project. There is extensive testing going on. We are including and adding tonal testing, which is very important. We are expanding our role. I've talked to folks in the community; they are very concerned. We are working with them. We are not ignoring these things.

It's passing curious to me that they never raise issues about nuclear waste, they never raise issues about coal pollution, about the challenges of electric transmission lines; they only attack renewable green energy. They have a singular obsession with anything that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. This is the party that—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Final supplementary? The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Back to the Premier: On Global News, the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change claimed that industrial wind turbine noise complaints are isolated to one project up in Huron–Bruce. But these concerns are not isolated. The proposal for Snowy Ridge, a project in my riding, was reviewed by a former MOECC employee who pointed out flaws in the project. The employee's assessment was redacted from the appeal process, two expert noise witness statements were redacted, the concerns of three residents were redacted, yet the minister—and he was the minister at the time—claimed that there were no expert witnesses to support health concerns.

The minister claims to take this issue seriously, but how can the minister explain this blatant scheme to re-

dact information and hide the facts your employees are even telling you?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: So, Mr. Speaker—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Leeds–Grenville, second time. And we'll discuss warnings later.

Finish, please.

1050

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The party opposite, whose leader spent years in Ottawa denying climate change, actively undermining the efforts of Quebec and Ontario, attacking carbon pricing—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): It starts up again, I'll go to warnings for those banging their desks to prevent answers.

Minister, finish, please.

Hon. Glen R. Murray: The party opposite made the claim for the better part of 10 years that wind turbines cause health problems. This government spent a considerable amount of money hiring the leading experts and doing medical research, as did the federal government, and found out the totality of the opposition party's claims were completely bogus and like so much, not science-based. The creationist party, the climate-denier party, doesn't like—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

WIND TURBINES

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Back to the Premier: It's no surprise to me to learn from Global that the minister has failed to investigate noise and health complaints related to industrial wind turbines. Liberal ministers have been ignoring homeowners in Dufferin–Caledon for over 10 years.

In 2011, I asked the Minister of Environment to help the Whitworth family when the doctor recommended they leave their home because of noise and electrical pollution. In 2013, the Whitworths received a one-sentence email from the Minister of Environment that said, "The ministry has closed your file at this time and the minister will not be taking any action on your complaint." Will the Premier do the right thing and reopen the Whitworths' file?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, as I said in answer to the first question, I am and have been very concerned about the community reaction to the siting of wind turbines. I met with many groups over a period of years. I sat with them. I listened to their concerns. I made sure that—

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Do you want to live in the Whitworths' home?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for Dufferin–Caledon, come to order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I made sure that we had studies in place, Mr. Speaker. I made sure that we worked with the federal government as the Health Canada studies were done. We made changes in terms of siting—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon, second time.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: We made changes in terms of the siting of wind turbines. We gave more responsibility and more authority to municipalities. We have made changes, Mr. Speaker, based exactly on the concerns that the members opposite are raising.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary? The member from Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry.

Mr. Jim McDonell: Speaker, to the Premier: Her minister is either willfully uninformed of the number of complaints about wind turbine noise filed with his department, or deliberately neglectful of his duty.

One of my constituents complained about how measurements were improperly conducted on the Nation Rise wind project. Now I know for a fact that the minister's own account and his constituency office were c.c.'d in the complaints. He says there was only one complaint, but as reported on Global News, there were thousands.

People across Ontario deserve answers and a resolution to their complaints. This government recently stated that, because of the surplus of power, they were cancelling the next round of energy projects. Will the Premier do the honourable thing and order her minister to put an immediate stop to all wind turbine developments until the massive backlog of complaints can be addressed?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Again, Mr. Speaker, we have worked to respond to concerns. We have responded to the concerns of the municipalities. I take these concerns very seriously and we have worked to address them and we will continue to work with—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon is warned.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, I have to ask the question: Is it not that this party does not want to talk about the reality that we are making changes in this province that they are labelling as "too much, too soon"? Because the changes that we are making are going to help people, as in the development of green renewable energy helps people, helps kids with asthma and cleans up the air.

This party doesn't want to talk about a \$15 minimum wage. This party doesn't want to talk about 100,000 child care spaces. Their leader—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

The member from Nepean–Carleton will come to order. Next time I have to stand for this kind of thing, we'll go to warnings.

Final supplementary? The member for Niagara West—Glanbrook.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's past time that the Premier paid attention. Hydro bills have skyrocketed by over 300%. Expensive and counterproductive power subsidies for turbines we don't want or need have contributed to the soaring energy prices that are the greatest burden people are facing, yet this government has ignored the thousands of complaints they've received. This Liberal government has not paid attention to the many petitions MPPs have presented regarding this issue, nor have they paid attention to their own communities. Some of the 90 unwilling communities are in several of their ridings as well.

Just a few weeks ago, this government had the opportunity to reverse their folly, when my motion for a moratorium came forward. Respect for local decision-making was at hand, but they voted it down.

Mr. Speaker, why does the Premier continue to ignore and dismiss everyone's concern?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Mr. Speaker, that's absolutely not the case. I have met with folks in that member's own riding, in Binbrook, and heard their concerns—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Huron—Bruce, second time, and the member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound. I've got a good memory.

Carry on.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: As I said, Mr. Speaker, I believe this party really does not want to talk about the concerns of people who believe that having a fair workplace and a \$15 minimum wage is important.

Their leader has made it clear that he thinks that is too much, too soon, but I would ask this: Is it too much, too soon for the 30% of Ontarians right now who make less than \$15 an hour? Is it too much, too soon for part-time workers to get paid the same as full-time workers—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Your time is up, Premier.

New question.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Speaker, to the Premier: The Premier has shown Ontarians time and time again throughout this session that she simply doesn't get what they're going through.

Families are at a tipping point when it comes to things like keeping up with their skyrocketing hydro bills. But instead of helping, the Premier has put herself and her party first by ramming through a borrowing scheme that she knows will cause bills to soar even higher than they are now.

When will the Premier apologize to Ontarians for putting her political agenda ahead of the very real struggles of the people of Ontario?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: My plan—our plan—for the people of Ontario is to invest in this province; to grow the economy; to work with business; to make sure that young people have access to an excellent education, from preschool right through to post-secondary; to make sure that families have access to child care; to make sure that kids have access to the medication they need and that their families can afford to look after them; and to make sure that kids have access to all of the services they need and that families have the support they need, including a reduction in their electricity prices—a reduction that will happen this summer, not in the distant future if a federal government should deign to agree with them, as the NDP plan would have.

Our plan is to make sure that people have the resources they need and that they are able to take part in the economic growth of this province. That's what our fair workplaces plan is about. That's what our fair hydro plan is about. That's what our Fair Housing Plan is about—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): As promised, the member from Prince Edward—Hastings is warned. We're now in warnings.

Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Premier: The Premier is focused on bringing up her dismal poll numbers. This became obvious when, even after the Financial Accountability Officer confirmed that her hydro borrowing scheme would mean higher, not lower, bills for families and businesses, she rammed it through the House anyway.

This plan is not good for everyday Ontarians. It is good for those at the top, though. Why is the Premier more concerned about her wealthy Bay Street friends than she is about the people who voted for her?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The Minister of Housing is warned.

Premier?

1100

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: It's the last day in the Legislature before we go on to the summer portion of our—I'm not going to say "break" because I know that everyone in this Legislature is going to be working very hard once the House rises. But because it's the last day, I really have to say this: I know that the opposition parties believe that, by making a personal attack and raising the issue of my personal polling numbers, somehow that's going to get under my skin and that's a good political tactic. Here's a news flash: I know what the polls say; I understand that. I am absolutely focused on doing what's in the best interests of the people of this province today and every day through till the election.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Order.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Feel free to continue to insult the Chair and be disrespectful.

Final supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Back to the Premier—that was strangely Nixonian, I have to say, Speaker—families and businesses have been telling the Premier for years now that they can't afford more hydro rate hikes, yet she has pushed ahead with the sell-off of Hydro One and her borrowing scheme, both of which will drive up hydro rates. Why is the Premier ignoring what Ontarians are telling her?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: To the Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Let's talk about what happened in the House yesterday, Mr. Speaker. We voted in a plan that's actually going to reduce everyone's rates by 25%, on average. They voted against that.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry is warned.

I may move to naming. This is getting ridiculous—the disrespect you're showing the Chair and to each other.

Carry on.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: When it comes to making sure that you have in place a program to help the most vulnerable in this province and when it comes to lowering rates, both opposition parties voted against it. First Nations on-reserve individuals, many of whom live in abject poverty—we're reducing their rates. One of the things that they did, Mr. Speaker: They voted against it. We made sure with our plan that we're helping every single family in this province. That's something they continue to vote against.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

M^{me} France Gélinas: My question is for the Premier. It's not just our electricity system that the Premier's Liberal government has made worse. After years of frozen hospital budgets and cuts to front-line health care staff, the Premier's 2017 budget shortchanges hospitals again; this time, by about a \$300-million shortchange. Why is the Premier so intent on keeping our hospitals chronically underfunded?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: I think that the member opposite knows that there is, in our 2017 budget, a 3.1% increase to those hospital budgets and those operating budgets, across the board, and at least a 2% increase for every hospital in the province. On top of that, there is, I think, \$9 billion that will be available for construction and capital costs.

We absolutely recognize the critical work that is done by hospitals. We also recognized that, on top of the more than \$450 million that we put, in in-year funding, onto hospital base funding last year, there needed to be an increase to hospital operations. We put that in the budget in recognition of those concerns.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Budget freezes and cuts to front-line staff leads to overcrowding. It leads to poor

quality care. It leads to hallway medicine. Hospitals like the ones in Thunder Bay or Sault Ste. Marie are in a constant state of gridlock. We've seen occupancy rates of 120% in acute care units, and people receiving treatment in hallways, TV rooms, shower rooms, storage areas, patient lounges, and the list goes on. The Premier's constant cuts to health care are hurting people, the very people she is supposed to help.

Why does the Premier refuse to properly fund our hospitals?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: You know, when we provide a 5% increase to the operating budget of the Sault hospital that you just referenced—this year, more than \$6 million—when Health Sciences North in Sudbury received an additional \$6 million as well this fiscal year, in a budget that provides more than half a billion new dollars to our hospitals to help them address those issues that are most pressing to them, it boggles my mind that the member opposite would argue so vehemently in support of increasing hospital budgets, yet she would vote against a budget that does exactly that.

Mr. Speaker, we have a long list of hospitals that I'm happy to go through which received substantial increases in funding this year.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

M^{me} France Gélinas: What does hospital underfunding look like? Well, let me tell you about Henri Chartrand from my riding. What does his stay at HSN look like? His first two days was on a stretcher in the ER. Then he was moved to a TV room. What he told me was that it was humiliating, embarrassing and a demeaning experience that he never wants to have to go through again.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chartrand is just one of literally hundreds of people from across the province that have suffered the same indignity because of our hospital overcrowding, because of underfunding by this government.

When will the Premier stop the cuts and finally invest in people's health and dignity?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, we just did last week in a budget that that member voted against and her party voted against.

I think perhaps she's imagining what an NDP government would look like. She might be imagining 1994, when the NDP announced a \$53-million cut to 10 of Ontario's psychiatric hospitals, representing a 17% cut in those hospitals. Or she might be remembering the last time that they were in government, when they delisted 10% of all the drugs that were provided to Ontarians. By the way, more drugs were delisted by that government than are in their meagre proposal to add 125 essential drugs in their so-called pharmacare plan, Mr. Speaker. They closed 24% of the acute hospital beds in the province. They closed, as I mentioned, 13% of the mental health beds, and they reduced hospital funding in, thankfully, their last year as government.

WSIB HEARING AID PROGRAM

Mr. John Yakabuski: My question is to the Minister of Labour. It is Injured Workers' Day. This past January, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board made significant changes to its hearing aid program without properly consulting audiologists and WSIB recipients. They have now hand-picked only three suppliers. As a result of these changes, workers across the province now have fewer options, which is negatively impacting their quality of life.

Speaker, as a result of on-the-job hearing loss, tens of thousands of workers now require hearing devices in order to maintain a baseline quality of life. The new system does not save money, but outcomes for WSIB recipients are much worse. How can the minister defend a policy change where no one benefits?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you very much to the honourable member for what is a very, very important question and one that I turned my attention to because of the same concerns that were being addressed.

At the Ministry of Labour and the WSIB, we're committed to making sure we treat injured workers with the dignity, respect and services that they need and deserve.

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We all know how important it is that Ontario workers who are dealing with the challenges of work-related hearing loss receive the highest-quality services and the highest-quality equipment.

I was made aware of some of the concerns that injured workers, and the audiologists themselves, have with some of the recent changes. I've personally been in touch with the WSIB on this issue. I'm confident that we can find a way to work our way through this, with the new changes, to make sure we serve injured workers in this province—who, through no fault of their own, find themselves dealing with the challenges of hearing loss—with the respect and the dignity they do deserve.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. John Yakabuski: Again to the Minister of Labour: I know the WSIB claims that there is an exemption process, but we've heard of cases where patients' requests are being unfairly delayed, if approval comes at all. Moreover, the price cap on hearing aid devices remains the same, so the cost to the system is unchanged.

Again, it begs the question: Why was this change implemented in the first place? A hearing aid is not a one-size-fits-all. Choosing the right hearing aid is a choice for the patients and their hearing health care professionals. That decision should be left to them when there is no cost difference.

Will the Minister of Labour commit to ensuring that the WSIB reverses these flawed changes, so that workers can choose the device that suits them best?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Once again, my thanks to the member for the supplementary.

Let me tell you, Speaker, after the discussion I've had with the WSIB, the WSIB is working very closely with the hearing aid manufacturers themselves, the Ontario

Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists, and clinics across Ontario.

The workers themselves deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, and to have a smooth transition that goes along with that. I'm continuing to monitor the situation, continuing to ensure that injured workers are provided with the necessary resources. Whether they have exceptional needs or complex needs, we can deal with these.

But I'll tell you, Speaker, that to take lessons from this party on the treatment of injured workers and the way they're approaching what we're trying to do about helping workers in Ontario—I would love to see them support increases to the minimum wage for the lowest-income workers in the province of Ontario, who face challenges on a daily basis paying the rent, buying clothes for their kids—ordinary expenses. Too much, too soon—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

New question.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Gilles Bisson: My question is to the Premier. Premier, I want to tell you the story of Richard and Theresa Madore, from Timmins. Richard, unfortunately, suffered a stroke some time ago, and was treated at the Timmins and District Hospital, doing their very best. What happens? The budget gets cut, and they get rid of physiotherapy.

Richard loses his physiotherapy and goes home. There are not enough services by CCAC to allow him to live at home alone, so his wife has to quit her job in order to care for him, because he can't be left alone for long, long periods of time.

What makes matters even worse is he's 64 years old. He has no drug plan. He needs medication in order to deal with his medical condition.

He gives me a call and he says, "Why is it that Kathleen Wynne invented a drug plan that doesn't allow me, a person who is 64 years old, to get the medication that I need?"

So my question to you is this: Why did you leave people like Richard Madore out of the drug plan when, clearly, people who are 64, suffering from a stroke, need to have their medication costs covered, just like the NDP proposed?

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Just to remind the member: to the Chair, please, and we use titles and riding names.

Premier?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Obviously, when any of us hear stories like this, we're moved and concerned. It's important that all Ontarians have the supports that they need

at those moments, those times, when they truly need that support.

We have a strong hospital system. We're increasing the budget this year of Timmins hospital, to help it provide those highest-quality services. Our CCACs are going through transitions now by merging with our LHINs, so we can bring that care closer together and push the services to the front line, where they truly do benefit patients.

When it comes to drugs, and I'm happy to talk about it in the supplementary, we make every effort to provide drugs to those who do need them through a variety of programs, including Trillium, Ontario Works, ODSP and our seniors' program. I'll talk about that more in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You had a choice. Your government had a choice to be able to cover people like Richard and you chose not to. Not that people under 24 don't need medication as well, but we know the vast majority of people who use medication are over 25 and under 65, and they're not covered.

Yes, the Trillium drug plan is there, but they have to copay. He has no pension. She had to quit her job in order to be able to stay with him. So they have hardly the income to even pay the copay.

My question, again, to you, is very simply this: Why did you exclude people like Richard Madore, who's 64 years old, from being able to get access to the medication they need to have some quality of life as they go through their illnesses?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: It is true, Mr. Speaker: if you're one of the Ontarians who are lucky enough to be prescribed one of the 3%—less than 3%—of drugs that are publicly available in this province. That's their proposal. If you're lucky enough that the drug you've been prescribed by your health care provider—and God knows, we would not want to limit the ability of physicians and nurse practitioners to prescribe what they believe is the best medication. If you're lucky enough to have one of those 125 out of the more than 4,400 drugs—that's their proposal. But the vast majority of Ontarians would not fall into that category.

I know it irks the member and the party opposite when we have people like Steve Morgan, who stood up with the leader of the third party when they proposed their pharmacare program, who said bravo about ours. He said, "When we write the histories of pharmacare in Canada this will be seen as the time when a clear principle was laid down by" this government.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Growth. Minister, we al-

ways hear you talking about how Ontario's economy is in a position of strength. We've been leading the G7 in growth for the past three years and have the lowest unemployment rate in 16 years. You're right: We're doing well today, and Ontario is incredibly competitive. This government has also made efforts to cut red tape by removing 80,000 unnecessary regulations and hosting sector round tables.

But Minister, that's no guarantee we'll be doing well tomorrow. We're part of an aggressively competitive global economy. What is this government doing to ensure our businesses remain competitive and to make Ontario the easiest place in North America to do business tomorrow?

Hon. Brad Duguid: The member is absolutely right: We've done a lot to make Ontario one of the easiest places in the world in which to do business. But there's still more that we can do, and we're very ambitious in our vision to ensure that we continue to make Ontario the easiest place to do business in the new economy.

That's why the minister of small business and myself, just last week, announced eight new key reforms that are going to help us get there. The first is a measure to reduce future regulatory administrative costs. For every dollar that we incur in administration costs, we'll have to save \$1.25 for any company that incurs that cost.

We're taking measures as well to streamline compliance for small business to align our regulations with other jurisdictions, to recognize that businesses have unique compliance initiatives—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Answer.

Hon. Brad Duguid: There's more, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be referring the supplementary to the minister of small business, who will continue on with some of these important initiatives.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My next question is to the minister of small business. Being someone who's been involved in small business all my life, this ministry is very, very important.

Minister, it was recently reported that Canada's big banks are forecasting that Ontario will lead the country in economic growth this year. We also know that Ontario has created almost 700,000 jobs since the depths of the recession; that is a recovery rate of over 250%. Minister, these are promising figures and we want to make sure that Ontario continues down this path of prosperity.

Would you please tell the Legislature what initiatives are in place to help support this economic growth in Ontario and, more specifically, what small businesses can expect in the coming months and years?

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Hon. Brad Duguid: The minister responsible for small business.

Hon. Jeff Leal: I want to thank the member from Northumberland-Quinte West, who knows a lot about small business. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that this year is the 50th anniversary of the Brighton Speedway, a business that has been owned by the Rinaldi family for

over 30 years. I'm telling you that on a sunny Saturday night, the place to be is at Brighton Speedway, because the member knows how important small businesses are to the province of Ontario.

Just this past Monday, I had the opportunity to be at the Galleria Supermarket when we announced that we're cutting fees by \$2,000 per year for independent grocers in the province of Ontario on their beer and wine sales. That is a 66% decrease in the cost of doing business in that particular sector of our economy.

And we're doing a couple of other things. We're looking at ways to increase government procurement for small businesses in the province of Ontario, and we're launching a one-stop access to—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

WATER EXTRACTION

Mr. Ted Arnott: My question is for the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. New regulations governing water-taking permits for water bottling companies were recently posted on the environmental registry. For years I have maintained that any decisions regarding large-scale water-taking permit applications should be science-based, to ensure that our groundwater is preserved and protected for future generations. I also believe that communities should be consulted, that their long-term growth plans should be taken into consideration and that hydrogeological studies should be peer reviewed.

Can the minister assure this House that his new regulations will ensure the long-term sustainability of our groundwater resources?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: I want to thank the member for a very thoughtful question. From our ongoing conversations, I know he has a very sincere concern about this. He represents a part of the province which is water-stressed, particularly in the adjacent neighbourhoods of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, where we have groundwater being drawn off.

Our concern with these regulations is the security of groundwater resources, which are particularly challenging. Where they are being drawn off and also used by municipalities and private water bottlers, these are areas that are most water-stressed. It's exactly for those reasons—to protect the security of Ontarians' supply of clean, reliable water—that we are posting those.

Through the posting period and the review, the science-based teams that are looking at this and our partnership with community leaders and municipalities will do exactly what the member is asking.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Ted Arnott: Each year, an untold number of plastic water bottles are thrown away, ending up in landfills or littering our countryside. I've said for years that the government needs to provide the necessary leadership and policies to encourage the recycling of more plastic water bottles.

Most Canadian provinces have a deposit or refund program that covers plastic water bottles to encourage recycling. I've been told that Manitoba will be launching a deposit system soon.

The government recently raised the fees charged to water bottling companies by \$500 for every million litres of water drawn. I maintain that some of that money should be shared with host municipalities, and not just be a cash grab for the government. Will the minister commit to sharing some of that money with municipalities, and also put some of it towards improved efforts to recycle all plastic water bottles in province of Ontario?

Hon. Glen R. Murray: Again, I'm going to rush to qualifiedly agree with the member opposite, because I know he and his party supported Bill 151 on the circular economy, the Waste-Free Ontario Act. At Ice River Springs, for example, the Gotts have 100% recycling recovery using extended producer responsibility, which is an economy-wide market mechanism that is working very well. Your party supported doing exactly that.

We are open to a discussion about alternatives, as the member suggested, but we want to make sure that we're not creating a duplicate system. We want to allow industry and environmental groups to work with the extended producer responsibility, which the Gotts and the Ice River Springs company are familiar with as a global leader right now in resource recovery.

Should this not work, we will then have to look at alternatives, but I think we should first give a bill that was just passed months ago a chance—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Peggy Sattler: My question is to the Premier. There is a province-wide crisis in student mental health that this government continues to ignore.

Between 2012 and 2015, Algoma University had to increase its mental health counselling budget by 133%, even as enrolment was declining.

At Georgian College, there was a 211% jump in the number of counselling appointments between 2013 and 2016.

At the University of Toronto, there was a 143% increase in the number of students receiving mental health accommodations between 2009 and 2016.

The additional \$6 million this year for campus mental health, to be shared by 24 colleges and 20 universities, is a drop in the bucket compared to the explosion in the need.

Speaker, instead of one-offs, when will this Liberal government implement a comprehensive, long-term strategy, engaging both campuses and communities, to deal with this urgent crisis?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you for this question, because it is a very important one. I can tell

you, as I travel the province, as I meet with student groups, the number one issue I hear about is mental health. There is no question that demand for mental health services is growing.

That's exactly why this last budget, which the member opposite voted against, sadly, included a 60% increase in funding for campus mental health support.

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Six zero.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That is a six zero per cent increase, because we need to be there. When students are faced with challenges, when they want some help with their mental health, we need to be there.

I have to say that I did this announcement with the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care at the University of Toronto, and it was extremely well received, Speaker, extremely well received.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: This week, I met with both Colleges Ontario and the Council of Ontario Universities, who told me that this government's lack of action is forcing colleges and universities to become mental health providers as well as educational institutions.

Many of the 12,000 children and youth who are waiting in Ontario for mental health services are only able to access supports once they get to post-secondary. But without adequate resources on campus, many schools feel that they have no choice but to farm out support services to private contractors, something McMaster University psychiatrist Dr. Catharine Munn says will be a disaster for students.

Speaker, we don't expect post-secondary institutions to treat physical illness. Why does this Liberal government expect them to treat mental illness?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Speaker, let me repeat: This budget contains a 60% increase—

Ms. Catherine Fife: So little, so late.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Kitchener-Waterloo is warned.

Carry on.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —a 60% increase in funding that is earmarked for campus mental health.

But that is not the full extent of the investments that we're making. We're expanding access to psychotherapy services, while developing a new province-wide, publicly funded psychotherapy program to help people, including students, living with conditions such as anxiety and depression.

We're supporting up to nine integrated youth service hubs, to provide young people with walk-in, one-stop access to mental health, which, as the member opposite knows, is in great demand because those students are using the services at the hubs. This will be a youth-focused service for people with mental health and addiction issues, as well as other supports under one roof—and free prescription medications for people 25—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

New question.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

Ms. Daiene Vernile: My question is for the Minister of Infrastructure. Every member of this House knows that our province is well into an unprecedented period of investment in infrastructure. We're building and repairing critical public infrastructure, such as schools, hospitals and public transit, because we're committed to making life better in Ontario.

In my own riding of Kitchener Centre, just last week, I announced \$2.3 million to repair sewers and deliver clean water. As I said at the time, sewers may not seem that glamorous, but they're essential to creating a livable city.

We know that this multi-billion dollar infrastructure strategy is improving lives, not just in my riding but in every riding in this province, including every single one represented by members of the opposition.

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Could the minister please speak to how the benefits of these investments are being felt in communities right across Ontario?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: Thank you to the member for the question.

I have to start by saying thank you to the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party. I'm sure they are aware that not one member of their caucuses has asked me a question on infrastructure in this place since I became Minister of Infrastructure: over two full sessions. That must be because they think we're doing a terrific job on infrastructure in the province, because it's hard to criticize a plan that will deliver at least \$53 million in OCIF funding directly to municipalities in PC ridings in 2017, and a plan that has delivered a \$474-million mental health facility in the opposition leader's riding, as well as over \$8 million in OCIF and water infrastructure funding to communities in his riding.

Speaker, our record speaks for itself, and the opposition's deafening silence on infrastructure is worth a thousand words.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

Supplementary.

Ms. Daiene Vernile: Thank you to the minister for his very informative answer. So, with these facts—and, Speaker, facts do matter—perhaps the Leader of the Opposition might stop giving speeches where he's claiming that we aren't getting shovels in the ground. Just come to my community of Kitchener Centre and you will see plenty of shovels in the ground: the LRT project, the Shirley Avenue widening and the new GO train and GO bus storage facility. It's important for every member of this House, and every constituent we represent, to have these facts.

We're moving forward with our \$190-billion infrastructure investment plan. Our economy is responding to the steps that we're taking in making life easier and more affordable. Our unemployment rate is the lowest it has

been in 16 years, and we've added 700,000 net new jobs since the height of the recession.

Could the minister please share more facts on how he is helping to build Ontario up?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: I'm glad to share some important facts about our infrastructure investments.

Here's a fact for the leader of the third party: Our government has procured four major health care projects in Hamilton, worth almost a billion dollars. All four used the AFP procurement model the NDP detests so much. And of those four, all were delivered on budget and all but one were delivered on time.

Another fact: Hamilton is receiving \$1 billion for its LRT and up to \$33 million this year for water and waste water infrastructure, and our current budget added \$30 billion more for critical infrastructure.

Both leaders opposite voted against enhanced quality of life for all Ontarians by opposing our budget. So the next time those two leaders go to the ballot box, they should take a good, hard look in the mirror and then vote for Kathleen Wynne.

PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

Mr. Bill Walker: My question is to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Back in December 2016, the minister received a proposal from the Ontario Personal Support Workers Association requesting the right to become the provincial governing body of PSWs. The minister will know that there are many more PSWs in the health care system today than ever before. This means there's a greater need and role for our hard-working PSWs to match the increased need for home and community care. It also means there's a big need for proper oversight by a governing body to oversee the needs of PSWs and their clients.

The minister purports to be supportive of a health care system that protects all patients and health care providers. Therefore, can he tell this House when we can expect a response or action regarding this proposal?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the opportunity to talk about the government investments in our personal support workers. I have to say I have the greatest respect for the thousands upon thousands of personal support workers who work so hard, day and night, and often on very short notice. When you talk to people who are receiving care from them, wherever that might be—it might be in a long-term-care facility; it might be in their home—I think, alongside nurses, the individuals, the type of health care worker, that are most highly respected by individuals and the ones that they develop that strong, respectful, and at times challenging relationship with are our PSWs. So we've made investments where we've dramatically increased the minimum wage here in Ontario; now \$16.50 is the minimum. It reflects the talents that they bring. But we're doing much more with regard to our PSWs, and I'll talk about that in the supplementary.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Bill Walker: Perhaps the minister should look at the people in the audience who are here who are PSWs.

They were shaking their heads no. I remind the minister that his government already failed just a year ago, when they opened and closed the PSW registry, a failure that cost Ontarians over \$5 million.

With an increasingly aging population and our health care services being rationed, it's imperative that he takes action and gets this right. The OPSWA's proposal is comprehensive and outlines the importance of safety, accountability, legitimacy, trust and oversight, things you claim your government upholds. Mr. Speaker, the minister's response acknowledges the important and expanding roles of our PSWs and our health care system, but will he now agree to give them their right to have a say in the future of their profession?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: We are continuing to work on the future of the PSW registry. It is true that I made the decision to close the previous registry in 2016, because I had respect for the profession and I wanted to make sure the registry was a powerful tool for PSWs to gain employment, for employers to find employees and for individuals that rely on PSWs to get that support. We're working hard on that.

We've also created a standardized curriculum for PSWs. We've got a \$10-million annual fund for training for PSWs who want to advance their training further. We contributed an additional \$100 million this year alone to enhance support to home care clients. That translates into 1.3 million more hours of personal support care in home care. These are the kinds of investments that we're making to this important profession.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Ms. Sarah Campbell: To the Premier: Josiah Begg, 14 years old, was found dead in the McIntyre River in Thunder Bay on May 18. Tammy Keeash, 17 years old, was found dead in the McIntyre River less than two weeks earlier. Stacey DeBungee, 41, was found dead in the river in 2015.

Three more deaths to add to the seven unexplained deaths of young First Nations people in the river in the last decade, there to pursue public education and health care they can't get in their home communities—I named those seven students as well, and called on this government to investigate what happened to them.

A year ago, the coroner's inquest made a list of recommendations, including for this Liberal government. What has been done?

Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne: Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services.

Hon. Marie-France Lalonde: I thank the member opposite for that question. As I said to Grand Chief Fiddler and Chief Leonard yesterday on behalf of all of us, our condolences for the loss of life that has been taking place.

Certainly, as the minister responsible, I want to make sure—I would say that on this side of the House we really would like to address the situation and we are addressing the situation, Mr. Speaker. We are completely committed to working with our First Nation partners. We value the positive relationship we have with indigenous communities across our province.

At this point, the member fully knows there is a component where, because of the ongoing reviews that are taking place, I am unable to answer some details. But I have full confidence in the OCPC—the Ontario Civilian Police Commission—and the Office of the Independent Police Review Director, who will conduct a thorough and fair review.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Sarah Campbell: To clarify: My question is about action and what this Liberal government has done. In fact, the jury in the coroner's inquest recommended that all levels of government, including this Liberal government, acknowledge that, "Without the improvement of conditions in First Nations reserve communities, a gap in education outcomes between indigenous and non-indigenous students will remain; and that, where jurisdictional divisions between governments threaten to delay services—such as a quality of on-reserve education or funding for First Nations children—the government of first contact should provide the services or funding without delay.

So I ask again: Without excuses, without passing the buck, what has this government done to act on the recommendations into the ongoing deaths in Thunder Bay?

1140

Hon. Marie-France Lalonde: To the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Hon. David Zimmer: The question is a fair one, it's an important one. So much of what happens to indigenous youth here in Ontario, and particularly with respect to your question in northwestern Ontario, revolves around the issue of education. Education is a responsibility that the federal government and the provincial government share.

We are working with the federal government to facilitate ways in which those children who are sent from, for instance, the northern, remote communities to the southern communities to complete their high school can find that education in southern Ontario in a cultural environment and in a protected environment. Many of the youth who come from northern Ontario, the remotes, are 13 or 14; they find themselves in very difficult circumstances in Thunder Bay, in the largest cities. We are working to provide a situation in Thunder Bay where they can achieve their—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Arthur Potts: My question is to the Minister of Energy. This week, I'm so delighted to say, we all know

that we passed legislation with the government's fair hydro plan, which will lower electricity bills by 25% on average across the province. This change is going to result in significant and much-needed relief for every household in Ontario. I know that my constituents in Beaches–East York are looking forward to their discounted hydro bills in the coming months.

However, there are other elements of the government's plan that provide additional supports, particularly to communities that need it the most. Many low-income Ontarians are taking advantage of the Ontario Electricity Support Program, which provides an on-bill subsidy to those qualifying for the program. I understand that the fair hydro plan will be expanding on this program.

Speaker, would the minister please provide the House with more details on how the OESP is being expanded for the benefit of low-income families and individuals across the province?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I'd like to thank the member for the question and, of course, for his hard work on this file for his constituents in Beaches–East York as well.

Unlike the opposition parties, our government has made support for vulnerable communities a central pillar of our plan. The official opposition have no plan. The third party forgot to talk about vulnerable Ontarians in their energy plan. We didn't. We'll use existing funds through the Ontario Energy Board, which they already have, to expand the OESP, based on our direction.

The on-bill rebates offered to recipients have increased by 50% with the maximum credit now \$900 a year, and a special credit for those with unique electricity needs—they can see that credit up to \$1,300. The expanded program not only offers higher credits but is also accessible to more people because we have increased eligibility for the program. We heard, we acted and we listened.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Arthur Potts: Thank you to the minister for the incredible work that he is doing to make electricity affordable for all Ontarians.

On this side of the House, we were so thrilled to see that bill pass. I know that Ontarians are asking the opposition on the other side of the House, "What were they thinking? How could they be voting against lowering people's electricity bills?"

The OESP, however, provides important supports to low-income households in my community, and I'm proud that our government is demonstrating our commitment by helping these people in expanding the program. But expansion of the OESP is not the only social initiative that is being taken in the fair hydro plan, because while all taxpayers in the province will receive the savings of 25% on average, there are other programs which would support savings of upwards of 40% and 50% for certain customers who qualify.

Speaker, would the minister please explain to this House what these other programs are and how they will help provide relief on electricity costs?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I want to thank the member for that follow-up. One of the other programs that would

be expanded under our fair hydro plan is one designed to lower delivery rates and that is called the RRRP. This program provides a subsidy that lowers distribution costs for those in the most expensive-to-serve areas of our province. That's 800,000 families that will see a 40% to 50% reduction.

I could only assume that the opposition voted against that because that 40% to 50% reduction was too much, too soon. Just like when you're talking about bringing forward a minimum wage that will help families in this province, that's too much, too soon. But what about part-time workers to get paid the same as full-time workers? I know that for the official opposition: too much, too soon. Some 100,000 new child care spaces, free tuition: too much and too soon.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Jim Wilson: My question is for the Minister of Health. By now, the minister would be well aware of the need for new hospitals in my riding. I've brought this issue to the government's attention on a number of occasions. I've written letters; I've made statements; I've asked questions; I've collected thousands of petitions. The local health integration networks in my riding have indicated that their top priority is new hospitals in Collingwood and Alliston. To date, the government has been very good at listening to our concerns, but has never really indicated its support for the new hospitals in Alliston and Collingwood.

Today's litmus test is to see if our hospitals really do have the government's support. Later this afternoon, all parties will debate my private member's resolution that calls on the government to approve the planning grants requested by both hospitals. So I ask the minister: Will the government do exactly that and approve the planning grants?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you. Minister?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I'm honoured to have the last word in question period before the summer break, especially on such an important subject. However, I do have to say that it's slightly ironic because a party that has consistently told the government to spend less—this is a question about investing in hospitals and spending more. And ironic, as well, of course, because we had \$9 billion of new capital infrastructure in this year's budget that was just recently passed that that member and that party voted against, notwithstanding that the Collingwood and the Stevenson hospitals are important hospitals to their communities and important hospitals to this government.

They have both submitted pre-capital submissions; they've now moved on, with the ministry's support and the LHINs' support, to stage 1. We continue to move forward, and I think it is positive that we continue to work collaboratively as we move through, as all hospitals in this province do, the various processes and stages required.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound on a point of order.

Mr. Bill Walker: I'd like to welcome Kinni Burgess and Sabrina Kreiner, parents of students from Peninsula Shores District School, joining our students here.

Hon. Mitzie Hunter: I rise on a point of order: I'd like to welcome a group from my riding from the Settlement Assistance and Family Support Services, Kingston Road. A group of 70 of them are here today with Indira Basu.

Miss Monique Taylor: I would like to welcome and thank the father of one of our pages, Claire Le Donne. Dino Le Donne has had three pages here at Queen's Park. Claire is the youngest, so I'm sure this will be his last visit. Welcome to Queen's Park, and thank you for everything that you've done.

Mr. Jack MacLaren: It gives me great pleasure to introduce two people in the gallery as guests: Queenie Yu and Tanya Granicallen from Parents as First Educators.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Speaking of introducing pages and pages' parents, I have some sad news. Please allow me to let you know that regrettably this is the last day for our pages. I know you want to express your thanks for the wonderful work they've done.

Applause.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Extend the sitting another week. I want to stay.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Absolutely not.

DEFERRED VOTES

TIME ALLOCATION

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We do have business to do, though. We have a deferred vote on government notice of motion number 34, relating to allocation of time on Bill 134, An Act to implement 2017 Budget measures.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1150 to 1155.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On May 31, 2017, Mr. Sousa moved government notice of motion number 34, relating to allocation of time on Bill 134, An Act to implement 2017 Budget measures.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Berdinetti, Lorenzo

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie

Milczyn, Peter Z.
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir

Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Des Rosiers, Nathalie
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad

Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted

Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sousa, Charles
Takhar, Harinder S.
Thibeault, Glenn
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Campbell, Sarah
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Des Rosiers, Nathalie
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Fife, Catherine

Ayes

Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Fraser, John
French, Jennifer K.
Gélinas, France
Hatfield, Percy
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah
Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted

Milczyn, Peter Z.
Miller, Paul
Moridi, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sattler, Peggy
Sousa, Charles
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Taylor, Monique
Thibeault, Glenn
Vanhof, John
Vernile, Daiene
Wong, Soo
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Campbell, Sarah
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
French, Jennifer K.
Gélinas, France
Hardeman, Ernie

Harris, Michael
Hatfield, Percy
MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Paul
Munro, Julia
Nicholls, Rick
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pettapiece, Randy

Sattler, Peggy
Smith, Todd
Tabuns, Peter
Taylor, Monique
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanhof, John
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakubski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 52; the nays are 34.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Motion agreed to.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 SUR LE SOUTIEN À L'ENFANCE, À LA JEUNESSE ET À LA FAMILLE

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 89, An Act to enact the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, to amend and repeal the Child and Family Services Act and to make related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 89, Loi édictant la Loi de 2017 sur les services à l'enfance, à la jeunesse et à la famille, modifiant et abrogeant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1158 to 1159.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On May 31, 2017, Mr. Del Duca moved third reading of Bill 89, An Act to enact the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, to amend and repeal the Child and Family Services Act and to make related amendments to other Acts.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Barrett, Toby
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Fedeli, Victor
Hardeman, Ernie
Harris, Michael

MacLaren, Jack
MacLeod, Lisa
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
McNaughton, Monte
Munro, Julia
Nicholls, Rick
Oosterhoff, Sam

Pettapiece, Randy
Smith, Todd
Thompson, Lisa M.
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yakubski, John
Yurek, Jeff

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 63; the nays are 23.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I recognize the government House leader.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker. Her Honour awaits.

Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario entered the chamber of the Legislative Assembly and took her seat upon the throne.

ROYAL ASSENT SANCTION ROYALE

Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell (Lieutenant Governor): Pray be seated.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): May it please Your Honour, the Legislative Assembly of the province has, at its present meetings thereof, passed certain bills to which, in the name of and on behalf of the said Legislative Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

The Acting Clerk-at-the-Table (Mr. Trevor Day): The following are the titles of the bills to which Your Honour's assent is prayed:

An Act to enact the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, to amend and repeal the Child and Family

Services Act and to make related amendments to other Acts / Loi édictant la Loi de 2017 sur les services à l'enfance, à la jeunesse et à la famille, modifiant et abrogeant la Loi sur les services à l'enfance et à la famille et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures / Loi prévoyant des mesures contre le racisme.

An Act to enact the Ontario Fair Hydro Plan Act, 2017 and to make amendments to the Electricity Act, 1998 and the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 / Loi édictant la Loi de 2017 sur le Plan ontarien pour des frais d'électricité équitables et modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité et la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario.

An Act to revive 2053266 Ontario Inc.

An Act to revive Prosper Legal Management Inc.

An Act to revive 1049491 Ontario Inc.

An Act to revive 564539 Ontario Limited.

An Act to revive 1476283 Ontario Limited.

An Act to revive Braiserry Chicken Ltd.

An Act to revive Roy Wilson Real Estate Inc.

An Act respecting The East York Foundation.

An Act to revive Sierra Cleaning Solutions Inc.

An Act to revive St. Pola Drugs Inc.

An Act to revive SKAS Auto Services Inc.

An Act to revive Millar Wajer Holdings Inc.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): In Her Majesty's name, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor doth assent to these bills.

Au nom de Sa Majesté, Son Honneur la lieutenant-gouverneure sanctionne ces projets de loi.

Her Honour was then pleased to retire.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I just wanted you to sit down.

Pray allow me one comment. Be safe. Enjoy your family. Enjoy the break, although the break is not just from here. You work hard. You work very hard on behalf of the people of Ontario, and I know you deserve credit for all the work that you do for those people you represent. I thank you for the honour of allowing me to be your Speaker.

Applause.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): There are no further deferred votes. Therefore, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

The House recessed from 1210 to 1300.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. John Fraser: I'd like to welcome to the Ontario Legislature some developmental service support workers who are here for the changing workplaces act and for a private member's bill I'll be putting in this afternoon. We have Sandy Green, Jaqueline Haynes and Jennifer Biro. Thank you very much for being here.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: I'd like to introduce a number of people who are here with us today. We've got,

from UFCW, Tim Deelstra; from SEIU, Michael Spitale, Fatima Perez, Cecilia Platero, Sandy Green and Jennifer Biro. Thank you for joining us at Queen's Park.

Speaker, please welcome them to Queen's Park.

Mrs. Cristina Martins: I, too, have a number of people to introduce here at Queen's Park this afternoon. From the Ontario Federation of Labour, Rob Halpin and Melisa Bayon; from the UFCW, Mark Hennessy and Joe Pereira, who is no stranger to my constituency office; and from the SEIU, Hilario Mario Manzano, Tom Galivan and Jaqueline Haynes. Welcome to Queen's Park.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

PENSION PLANS

Mrs. Julia Munro: It is my pleasure to rise today to make a brief comment on the budget. I can't say it's very often that I rise to congratulate the government on what they have done, but today I want to mark on the record my appreciation of the inclusion of the pooled registered pension plan in this most recent budget.

As many of you will remember, I introduced and debated a private member's bill on this very topic back in 2014. At the time, I argued, and still believe, that the PRPP is a flexible tool for retirement savings that presents an opportunity for those without a workplace pension plan. I am glad to see that this government recognizes the importance of this savings vehicle, and it is my hope that people from across Ontario will be able to build a more secure future with this tool at their disposal.

As a private member in the opposition, it is not often that one has the pleasure of seeing their ideas translated into legislation. While we all represent different parties come election time, the most important function we, as elected officials, have is to serve those who place their trust in us. I am pleased that this issue transcends partisan lines and will provide opportunity for those without a workplace pension to save for a more secure retirement.

GOVERNMENT'S RECORD

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I got elected in 2011 and, at that time, there were three pressing issues in the riding. Concerns were around emergency services at the hospital, there were concerns around auto insurance rates and there were concerns around temporary job agencies and the precarious employment that flows from that.

After six years, this government has done nothing to address these issues. On each issue this government has failed. Whether it's emergency wait times, people continue to face problems not just in my riding but across this province.

Auto insurance: On this file, this government continues to prefer to prioritize the profits of insurance companies over the protection of the people of this province. They've seen their protection slashed time and time

again, putting more profits in the pockets of insurance companies.

With precarious employment, on this issue of grave importance, particularly when it comes to racialized people, women and newcomers to this country, we see that this government has allowed temporary job agencies to exploit workers in this province. They continue to work in conditions which are substandard, and they continue to face the scenario where sometimes as much as half of their pay is clawed back by the agency.

This is unacceptable. We deserve better. The people of this province need better, and New Democrats are the only ones who will deliver it for the people.

PORTUGUESE HISTORY AND HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. Cristina Martins: As a proud Portuguese Canadian, I'm honoured to rise today to speak about Portuguese History and Heritage Month in Ontario and about Portugal Day, or, as it is known throughout the Portuguese diaspora, Dia de Portugal, de Camões e das Comunidades Portuguesas.

June 10 has been enshrined as Portugal Day in memory of the great Portuguese poet Luís de Camões and his famous epic poems, the *Lusiads*. Camões died on June 10, 1580.

Throughout the month of June, cultural performances, history seminars, poetry readings, street parades and many other activities will take place all across Ontario to celebrate and promote the richness of the history and traditions of the many regions of Portugal. These celebrations help to educate the Portuguese Canadian youth of their origins, as well as other communities across Ontario about the Portuguese culture and about the many economic, political and social contributions that the Portuguese Canadian community has made and continues to make to our province.

As the member of provincial Parliament for Davenport and a proud member of the Portuguese community, I'm privileged to represent the riding with the largest Portuguese Canadian community in Ontario and, in fact, in all of Canada.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone about the annual Portugal Day parade organized annually by the Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario, this year being held on Saturday, June 10. I hope to see you there. Obrigado, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The same to you.

CHAPMAN HOUSE

Mr. Bill Walker: I rise to share good news today. Last Friday, I was honoured to join 1,000 supporters from my riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound at the grand opening of the new 18,500-square-foot Chapman House hospice, located in Owen Sound.

The hospice is a community project that has been years in the making and involved many supporters of

compassionate end-of-life palliative care. The Chapman family and Chapman's Ice Cream of Markdale generously donated \$1 million towards this important project. Members of the Chapman family were among the people who attended Friday's ribbon-cutting event.

Hospice executive director Scott Lovell praises everyone at last week's celebration, recognizing, "We've done really well. We're really proud of the way the community has supported this project." But he did remind us that we've got a bit more to go, with another \$289,000 left to be raised in our community—a little plug in case people are listening.

The hospice is a community-owned, community-operated facility and a building project that has been entirely funded by private funds, with operating funds provided by the provincial government.

Ashley Chapman, the famous ice cream company's vice-president, also announced that a large number of their staff have donated and will continue to donate from their paycheques to support the ongoing operation of Chapman House and, furthermore, that Chapman's would also be donating a lifetime supply of ice cream to the hospice so visitors and others can always enjoy a frozen treat.

About 360 patients from across Grey-Bruce have stayed at the hospice since it opened in its temporary location at Seasons Retirement Communities in May 2013, with construction starting in April 2016. The first patients officially arrived today.

I invite the House to join me in congratulating the good work of hospice staff, board members and volunteers, as well as everyone who financially supported the project to bring to the people of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound and area compassionate care in a setting that feels like home.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I rise to address the whole question of a relief line for the Bloor–Danforth subway. People may be well aware that that subway is facing a crisis.

In my riding, at Pape subway station, people have to wait two or three trains at rush hour to get on a train. They are packed.

People who are coming down from Don Mills on buses to Pape and trying to get on the subway can't get on. They're stranded on the platforms.

When people get to Yonge Street, the platforms are packed there. They have to wait multiple trains to get on the subway.

People in this city depend on the strong, reliable, accessible operation of that subway system. The reality is that the city is planning a relief line that will go through Pape subway station and make a huge difference to the operation of the system, but no funds have been allocated from the province to do this work. As much as the Premier talks about the huge amount that's going to be allocated with infrastructure money, this project does not have a budget allocation.

The city of Toronto has called for an allocation of funds so that this critical piece of infrastructure can get built. I support that call. If we're going to avoid congestion in this city, if we're going to deal with pollution and with climate change, we have to have a transit system that works, and this is a key piece to ensure that it does work.

1310

GIRLS CAN FLY!

Ms. Daiene Vernile: The annual Girls Can Fly! event at the Waterloo Wellington Flight Centre highlights something that is very near and dear to my heart, and that's the promotion of women in STEM careers: science, technology, engineering, and math. It's an open invitation to girls who are eight to 18 to come out and tour the facility, meet women in aviation and even get a free flight in a small airplane or a helicopter.

Speaker, when you look at how many women actually work in Canada's aviation industry today, the numbers are quite dismal—only 5%. While women have made great strides in other streams, in aviation there's still a very long way to go. That's what Girls Can Fly! is all about—offering girls the opportunity to get inspired by experiencing first-hand the possibilities.

I'm pleased to say that over 240 girls and teens came out to the airport to take part in the daylong event. One of the speakers, Anne Hoffman, works in the control tower at Pearson airport. She's only one of two women controllers on a team of 43. Another speaker, Contessa Bishop, is a Q400 airplane captain. And Siobhan O'Hanlon is a 22-year-old first officer at Sunwing airlines and a graduate of the University of Waterloo's geography and aviation program.

Speaker, these women are helping to inspire the next generation of females in flight—something that might seem out of reach for many young girls. But as Amelia Earhart once said, "Never interrupt someone doing something you said couldn't be done."

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'll remember that.

INTERNET ACCESS

Mr. Lorne Coe: Access to the Internet is becoming increasingly tied to the economic development of local communities. In order to attract investments, jobs, families and build a knowledge-based economy, a community must be able to provide fast and affordable Internet connections.

That's why I welcome Flashfibr's \$400-million investment in Durham region to upgrade the aging Internet infrastructure. This will allow for affordable and fast fibre optic Internet, television, phone and IT products and services, beginning with the city of Oshawa in the summer of 2017.

This fits with the region of Durham's strategic vision to fuel economic growth and attract new business. This new IT infrastructure will connect the region's many

thriving economic sectors, including education, manufacturing and health care. Building on these sectors strengthens the economy, leading to job growth, and attracts families to the area who want to live, work and play in Durham region's communities.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE INITIATIVES

Ms. Catherine Fife: Waterloo region is fortunate to be home to Community Justice Initiatives, a groundbreaking, non-profit organization that teaches us about the principles of restorative justice and helps all people who are impacted by crimes and violence heal in a more holistic and meaningful way.

I recently attended a Fresh Start Creations donation ceremony at Grand Valley Institution, a federal penitentiary in Kitchener. Fresh Start Creations is a grassroots initiative that started when the women of GVI decided that they wanted to give back to society. The cards are created with volunteers from CJI and sold in our community, with proceeds donated by the women to a charity of their choice. On the night that I was there, the women at the maximum-security unit donated \$500 to Anselma House, a non-profit that supports women and children who are fleeing abusive environments.

I promised the women I met at GVI that I would take their kindness and resiliency with me back to Queen's Park and share what I've learned about the importance of restorative justice with my colleagues. I also promised them that we would start selling their beautiful cards at the Legislative Assembly gift shop. The cards are now for sale, so I encourage you all to stop by the gift shop and support the creative work that the women at GVI are doing to change their own lives and perspectives about incarcerated women.

Mr. Speaker, everyone deserves a chance to give back. And quite honestly, these women at GVI are inspirational.

BRUCE POWER

Mr. John Fraser: I stand today to recognize Bruce Power, as they are the first and only Canadian company to win the Top Innovative Practice Award. The Top Innovative Practice Awards are the nuclear industry's highest recognition of excellence, bestowed by the Nuclear Energy Assembly this year in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Since 1994, these awards have recognized creative new ideas and techniques developed by the nuclear industry's talented workforce. They have a direct impact on improving the safety and reliability of the nuclear energy industry around the world.

The TIP Award was given to Bruce Power for their production of Cobalt-60 with an Ottawa-based company, Nordion. Cobalt-60 sterilizes more than 40% of the world's single-use medical devices such as sutures, gloves and syringes, and saves countless lives by treating cancer patients. Cobalt-60 is also used worldwide for alternative treatments to traditional brain surgery and

radiation therapy for the treatment of complex brain conditions through a specialized, non-invasive knife.

Speaker, this is really a great Ontario news story and a great Canadian news story. This partnership provides the balance of the world's Cobalt-60, which is critical not just for medical but for food needs as well.

I'm proud to stand today and recognize Bruce Power.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

REAL RENT CONTROL ACT, 2017 LOI DE 2017 SUR LE CONTRÔLE RÉEL DES LOYERS

Mr. Tabuns moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 144, An Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 / Projet de loi 144, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2006 sur la location à usage d'habitation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: This bill is meant to address the many problems facing tenants that have not been addressed by the Liberals in their rent control bills that have come forward.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): One can still be warned or even named in the afternoon.

The member is reminded that explanatory notes are supposed to be used.

WSIB COVERAGE FOR WORKERS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES AND GROUP HOMES ACT, 2017 LOI DE 2017 SUR LA PROTECTION À ACCORDER AUX TRAVAILLEURS DANS LES ÉTABLISSEMENTS DE SOINS EN RÉSIDENCE ET LES FOYERS DE GROUPE PAR LA COMMISSION DE LA SÉCURITÉ PROFESSIONNELLE ET DE L'ASSURANCE CONTRE LES ACCIDENTS DU TRAVAIL

Mr. Fraser moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 145, An Act to amend the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997 / Projet de loi 145, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la sécurité professionnelle et l'assurance contre les accidents du travail.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. John Fraser: The WSIB Coverage for Workers in Residential Care Facilities and Group Homes Act, 2017, amends the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act to provide that an employer who operates a residential care facility or group home is a schedule 1 employer for the purposes of the act, which means that workers in similar settings will be given the same protections by mandatory workplace safety insurance in all settings.

TRANSPARENCY IN GAS PRICING ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 SUR LA TRANSPARENCE DANS LA FACTURATION DU GAZ

Mr. McNaughton moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 146, An Act to amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 to provide transparency in gas pricing / Projet de loi 146, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario pour assurer la transparence dans la facturation du gaz.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Mr. Monte McNaughton: The bill amends the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, to require that every gas distributor who issues an invoice for supplying gas to a consumer shall clearly and prominently show on the invoice the amount of the invoice that is reasonably attributable to all costs that are related to supplying the gas to the consumer and that the distributor or vendor has incurred, or is expected to incur, to comply with its obligations under the cap-and-trade program under the Climate Change Mitigation and Low-carbon Economy Act, 2016, or to do anything that it is authorized to do under the act.

SAFE NIGHT OUT ACT, 2017 LOI DE 2017 VISANT À FAVORISER DES SORTIES SANS DANGER

Ms. Sattler moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 147, An Act to amend the Liquor Licence Act to provide Sexual Violence and Harassment Training for Persons Working where Liquor is Sold / Projet de loi 147, Loi modifiant la Loi sur les permis d'alcool pour offrir une formation sur la violence et le harcèlement à caractère sexuel aux personnes travaillant dans des lieux où de l'alcool est vendu.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member for a short statement.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: This bill, known as the Safe Night Out Act, amends the Liquor Licence Act to ensure that

sexual violence and harassment training approved by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario is provided to all managers of premises in respect of which a licence or permit to sell liquor has been issued, and to persons involved in the sale or service of liquor on those premises.

The training would be required to be included as part of the server training course known as Smart Serve that is currently provided under the act to those persons.

FAIR WORKPLACES, BETTER JOBS ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 POUR L'ÉQUITÉ EN MILIEU DE TRAVAIL ET DE MEILLEURS EMPLOIS

Mr. Flynn moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 148, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and to make related amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 148, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2000 sur les normes d'emploi et la Loi de 1995 sur les relations de travail et apportant des modifications connexes à d'autres lois.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Excuse me.

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1323 to 1328.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All members, please take your seats. The member cannot leave.

Mr. Flynn moves that leave be given to introduce a bill entitled An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and to make related amendments to other Acts.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 69; the nays are 0.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I declare the motion carried.

First reading agreed to.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister does have a moment for a brief statement.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: The Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017, if passed, would make changes such as to raise the minimum wage, ensure that part-time workers are paid the same hourly wage as full-time workers, introduce paid sick days for every worker, bring Ontario's paid vacation time in line with the national average, and make employee scheduling fairer.

MOTIONS

CONSIDERATION OF BILL 148

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Pursuant to standing order number 74, I move that the order for second reading of Bill 148, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and to make related amendments to other Acts, be discharged, and that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that, pursuant to standing order 74, the order—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm not sure. I have to hear it again. Agreed? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs be authorized to meet on Monday, June 22, 2017, and Tuesday, June 23, 2017; and

From Monday, July 10, 2017, to Friday, July 14, 2017; and

From Monday, July 17, 2017, to Friday, July 21, 2017; and

From Monday, August 21, 2017, to Friday, August 25, 2017, for the purpose of consideration of Bill 148, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act, 2000 and the Labour Relations Act, 1995 and to make related amendments to other Acts.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Mr. Naqvi moves that the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs—

Interjection: Dispense.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Duguid, Brad	Munro, Julia
Anderson, Granville	Fife, Catherine	Murray, Glen R.
Arnott, Ted	Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Bailey, Robert	Forster, Cindy	Naqvi, Yasir
Baker, Yvan	Fraser, John	Oosterhoff, Sam
Ballard, Chris	French, Jennifer K.	Potts, Arthur
Barrett, Toby	Gélinas, France	Qaadri, Shafiq
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hardeman, Ernie	Rinaldi, Lou
Bisson, Gilles	Hoggarth, Ann	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Sattler, Peggy
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Singh, Jagmeet
Chiarelli, Bob	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sousa, Charles
Clark, Steve	MacCharles, Tracy	Tabuns, Peter
Coe, Lorne	Malhi, Harinder	Thibeault, Glenn
Colle, Mike	Mangat, Amrit	Thompson, Lisa M.
Coteau, Michael	Martins, Cristina	Vanthof, John
Del Duca, Steven	Martow, Gila	Vernile, Daiene
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Walker, Bill
Des Rosiers, Nathalie	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Dhillon, Vic	Milczyn, Peter Z.	Wong, Soo
DiNovo, Cheri	Miller, Paul	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Dong, Han	Moridi, Reza	Zimmer, David

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Dispense? Dispense.

Do we agree? Carried.

Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas since 2006 the Auditor General of Ontario had been responsible for reviewing all government advertising to ensure it was not partisan; and

"Whereas in 2015 the Wynne government watered down the legislation, removing the ability of the Auditor General to reject partisan ads; and

"Whereas the Wynne government has since run ads such as those for the Ontario Pension Plan that were extremely partisan in nature, which cost almost \$800,000; and

"Whereas the Wynne government is currently using taxpayers' money to run partisan hydro ads; and

"Whereas history shows that the Wynne Liberal government has increased government ad spending in the year prior to a general election;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately restore the Auditor General's authority to review all government advertising for partisan messages before the ads run."

I support this petition, affix my name to it, and give it to page Hayden to take to the table.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a petition here from community members and educators in my riding and across the province.

"Fix the Funding Formula.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas violence has been on the rise in publicly funded schools;

"Whereas mental health service needs have increased in publicly funded schools;

"Whereas identified students are no longer receiving the specialized support they require to succeed in publicly funded schools;

"Whereas Kevlar and classroom evacuations are considered solutions for unsafe situations in publicly funded schools;

"Whereas funding has dropped \$1.7 billion since 1997 (adjusted for enrolment changes and inflation) for publicly funded schools;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Adjust the public education funding formula to

"(a) provide a safe learning environment for students, volunteers and staff; and

"(b) provide meaningful supports to address the needs of all Ontario students."

I wholeheartedly support this petition, affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Jeremi.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. James J. Bradley: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas electricity prices have increased and in too many cases become unaffordable for Ontarians;

"Whereas Ontario is a prosperous province and people should never have to choose between hydro and other daily necessities;

"Whereas people want to know that hydro rate relief is on the way; that relief will go to everyone; and that relief will be lasting because it is built on significant change;

"Whereas the Ontario fair hydro plan would reduce hydro bills for residential consumers, small businesses and farms by an average of 25% as part of a significant system restructuring, with increases held to the rate of inflation for the next four years;

"Whereas the Ontario fair hydro plan would provide people with low incomes and those living in rural communities with even greater reductions to their electricity bills;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the Ontario fair hydro plan and provide relief for Ontario electricity consumers as quickly as possible;

"Continue working to ensure clean, reliable and affordable electricity is available for all Ontarians."

I have affixed my signature.

NANJING MASSACRE

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the events in Asian countries during World War II are not well-known;

"Whereas Ontarians have not had an opportunity for a thorough discussion and examination of the World War II atrocities in Asia;

"Whereas Ontarians are unfamiliar with the World War II atrocities in Asia;

"Whereas Ontario is recognized as an inclusive society;

"Whereas Ontario is the home to one of the largest Asian populations in Canada, with over 2.6 million in 2011;

"Whereas some Ontarians have direct relationships with victims and survivors of the Nanjing Massacre, whose stories are untold;

"Whereas the Nanjing Massacre was an atrocity with over 200,000 Chinese civilians and soldiers alike were indiscriminately killed, and tens of thousands of women

were sexually assaulted, in the Japanese capture of the city;

"Whereas December 13, 2017, marks the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre;

"Whereas designating December 13th in each year as the Nanjing Massacre Commemorative Day in Ontario will provide an opportunity for all Ontarians, especially the Asian community, to gather, remember, and honour the victims and families affected by the Nanjing Massacre;

"We, the undersigned residents of Ontario, urge the members of the Ontario Legislature to pass Bill 79, declaring Dec. 13 as the Nanjing Massacre Commemorative Day."

I totally agree with this petition. I sign my name and give it to page Rada.

DENTAL CARE

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I'd like to thank the London InterCommunity Health Centre and the many Londoners who signed this petition to expand public dental programs.

"Whereas lack of access to dental care affects overall health and well-being, and poor oral health is linked to diabetes, cardiovascular, respiratory disease, and Alzheimer's disease; and

"Whereas it is estimated that two to three million people in Ontario have not seen a dentist in the past year, mainly due to the cost of private dental services; and

1340

"Whereas approximately every nine minutes a person in Ontario arrives at a hospital emergency room with a dental problem but can only get painkillers and antibiotics, and this costs the health care system at least \$31 million annually with no treatment of the problem;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to invest in public oral health programs for low-income adults and seniors by:

"—ensuring that plans to reform the health care system include oral health so that vulnerable people in our communities have equitable access to the dental care they need to be healthy;

"—extending public dental programs for low-income children and youth within the next two years to include low-income adults and seniors; and

"—delivering public dental services in a cost-efficient way through publicly funded dental clinics such as public health units, community health centres and aboriginal health access centres to ensure primary oral health services are accessible to vulnerable people in Ontario."

I couldn't agree more, affix my signature and will give it to page Noah to take to the table.

INCLUSIVENESS

Mr. John Fraser: I have a petition here from students in my riding.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there has been an increase in fear and hate towards people in our communities who practise different religions and who are from different cultures and races than the majority of the population; and

"Whereas many of our friends are feeling frightened and alone in the face of any form of discrimination and hate; and

"Whereas we want to show the world that the hate seen in Ontario does not reflect the people of our province; and

"Whereas we believe that everyone should feel welcome and safe in our communities. It is the diversity of our province that makes it so wonderful;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That all members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario stand up and speak out against all forms of hate and discrimination and stand together in love and kindness."

ANTI-SMOKING INITIATIVES FOR YOUTH

Mr. Jeff Yurek: "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas in the past 10 years in Ontario, 86% of all movies with on-screen smoking were rated for youth;

"The tobacco industry has a long, well-documented history of promoting tobacco use on-screen;

"A scientific report released by the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit estimated that 185,000 children in Ontario today will be recruited to smoking by exposure to on-screen smoking;

"More than 59,000 will eventually die from tobacco-related cancers, strokes, heart disease and emphysema, incurring at least \$1.1 billion in health care costs; and

"Whereas an adult rating (18A) for movies that promote on-screen tobacco in Ontario would save at least 30,000 lives and half a billion health care dollars;

"The Ontario government has a stated goal to achieve the lowest smoking rates in Canada;

"79% of Ontarians support not allowing smoking in movies rated G, PG, 14A (increased from 73% in 2011);

"The Minister of Government and Consumer Services has the authority to amend the regulations of the Film Classification Act via cabinet;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To request the Standing Committee on Government Agencies examine the ways in which the regulations of the Film Classification Act could be amended to reduce smoking in youth-rated films released in Ontario;

"That the committee report back on its findings to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and that the Minister of Government and Consumer Services prepare a response."

I sign my name to this petition.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have all these petitions coming from Lively in my riding, and I'd like to thank Stacy Paajanen, who signed the petition. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the provincial funding formula does not recognize differences across the province, forces local school boards to compete with each other for students and does not allow capital dollars to be transferred to operating accounts where it makes sense; and

"Whereas school boards have now been forced into situations where they have to propose school closures due to inflexible policies and programs of the province; and

"Whereas under the current Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG), modified accommodation reviews are allowed with inadequate community consultation and insufficient assessment of the full impacts of school closures, particularly where schools being proposed for closure will result in no school in an area; and

"Whereas the PARG is flawed and school closures proposed under it will result in negative student outcomes and opportunities, irreversible impacts to families and communities and will undermine the mandates of municipalities and other provincial ministries;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"To place an immediate moratorium on all school closures across Ontario and to suspend all pupil accommodation reviews until the PARG and all funding programs have been subject to a substantial review by an all-party committee that will examine the effects of extensive school closures on the academic, social, environmental and economic fabric of students, families, communities and the province."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask Jeremi to bring it to the table.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Arthur Potts: I have a petition here from two extraordinary high school students from Malvern in Beaches–East York, Jasmine Rusnak and Emma Fletcher.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was created with the purpose of developing and enforcing accessibility standards to create an accessible Ontario by January 1, 2025; and

"Whereas Malvern Collegiate Institute ranks in the Fraser Institute's top 30 schools, yet is not accessible to students with a physical disability or to those who use mobility devices because it is three storeys and offers no ramps, stair lifts or elevators; and

"Whereas all students should have the right to attend a good school that is welcoming and accommodating of all students; and

"Whereas teachers, guest speakers, parents and other visitors to the school who have certain disabilities are

unable to enter the school and fully participate in school events either easily or at all properties; and

"Whereas students with physical disabilities may be forced to attend other schools solely on the basis of accessibility, which may deprive students of opportunities because of their impairment or disability; and

"Whereas the budget for elevator installation and other capital improvements in public schools is controlled by the province of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario grant the Toronto District School Board a specific allocation of funds for the installation of an elevator at Malvern Collegiate Institute, to make the facility more accessible to people with physical disabilities and/or users of mobility devices."

It's signed by over 400 students. I've signed it myself, and I leave it with the page.

HEALTH CARE FUNDING

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Ontario's growing and aging population is putting an increasing strain on our publicly funded health care system; and

"Whereas since February 2015, the Ontario government has made ... unilateral" cuts "to physician services expenditures which cover all the care doctors provide to patients; and

"Whereas the decisions Ontario makes today will impact patients' access to quality care in the years to come and these cuts will threaten access to the quality, patient-focused care Ontarians need and expect;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care return to the table with Ontario's doctors and work together through mediation-arbitration to reach a fair deal that protects the quality, patient-focused care Ontario's families deserve."

I support this petition. I affix my signature to it and I give it to page Katie.

MIDWIFERY

Ms. Catherine Fife: "Ontario Needs Pay Equity for Midwives.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas midwives provide expert, women-centred care before, during and six weeks following birth; and

"Whereas midwifery is a female-dominated profession, with women comprising over 99% of the field; and

"Whereas midwives have been providing cost-effective care since 1994, despite not receiving a pay increase until 2005; and

"Whereas a 2016 report found that the health care industry in Ontario has a 37% gender wage gap, contributing to this provincially systemic issue; and

"Whereas in September 2014, Premier Wynne directed the Minister of Labour and the minister responsible for women's issues to collectively develop a wage gap strategy for the province of Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to direct the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to work with the Association of Ontario Midwives to reinstate a pay equity lens for the profession of midwifery, and compensate midwives appropriately for the expert, women-centred, continuum of care that they provide to pre- and post-natal mothers and infants."

I fully support this petition, as you may have guessed, and will affix my signature to it.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The time allocated for petitions has expired.

VISITORS

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Parry Sound–Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: Thank you for indulging me. I wanted to introduce my son, Stuart Miller, who is here visiting in the members' west gallery, and his friend Kara Langley, who is here for the first time at Queen's Park. Thank you for allowing me to do so.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Jim Wilson: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care should immediately approve the planning grant requested by the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital in the town of Collingwood, and the planning grant requested by Stevenson Memorial Hospital in the town of New Tecumseth, allowing both hospitals to proceed respectively with much-needed redevelopments.

1350

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Wilson has moved private member's notice of motion number 43. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Jim Wilson: I want to start by thanking the many people from Simcoe–Grey—I think we had 98 people come down this afternoon to watch this debate. Thank you for being here. I certainly commend your civil action. If the government doesn't vote for it, I won't encourage you to be civil anymore.

These people have taken time out of their busy lives to show their support. I hope the government takes notice today.

I also want to thank the some 3,000 people in my riding who have taken this time to sign a petition for

either the Collingwood hospital or the Alliston hospital. I think I saw one or two sign both. Their voices are being heard here today.

Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of great importance to the people of my riding. As members in this House will know, Simcoe–Grey is the home of two hospitals: Collingwood General and Marine Hospital and Stevenson Memorial Hospital in Alliston. The Collingwood hospital was built in the late 1950s; Stevenson Memorial Hospital was built in the early 1960s. The infrastructure is old and outdated and badly in need of redevelopment. There is a lack of space and storage, and as a result, patients and equipment are overflowing into the hallways.

I want to be clear that I am not suggesting that patient care at these hospitals is in any way substandard. This is certainly not an issue, as compassionate, tender loving care is the norm at each hospital. The hospitals are staffed by incredibly caring, talented and well-educated individuals, and they are supported by a legion of dedicated volunteers. These same volunteers help fundraise for our hospitals, and in doing so they so very often contribute their own money. All of the stakeholders, in some fashion, are working towards the common goal of getting Ministry of Health approval for redevelopment. But what these two hospitals need now, what the government can help with today, is approval of the hospitals' planning grant requests.

Let me tell you a bit more about these two hospitals in my riding and about the enormous efforts they have already gone through in the process of putting together the redevelopment applications. Just so you know, the information I am going to read today is being provided directly from the hospitals, so it won't be one of my usual partisan speeches.

Collingwood General and Marine Hospital is a 60-bed facility on a journey to build a new hospital for its patients, patients who reside in the south Georgian Bay region of Clearview township, Collingwood, the Blue Mountains and Wasaga Beach. The hospital serves more than 60,000 permanent residents in addition to the 3.5 million visitors who visit the Georgian triangle each year. Many of these visitors are from right here in the GTA. The hospital's redevelopment journey began in the fall of 2014 on stage 1 of the five-stage application process called the master program/master plan.

Planning teams consisting of more than 100 staff and physicians spent a year working diligently on the master program, a document which defines the future programs and services needed in the new hospital, and on the master plan, which identifies the physical space needed for a new hospital.

Multiple rounds of community education and engagement sessions were held in all four communities. After two years and much hard work, the hospital submitted its complete stage 1 application to the capital branch of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on September 30, 2016. After a rigorous site evaluation process and with community input, the hospital board has identified a preferred site in the town of Collingwood on Poplar Side

Road. The Poplar site, adjacent to a local community college, will allow a new regional hospital to become an even more significant player as it will facilitate a higher probability of achieving the hospital's greater vision of being one of the first medium-sized hospitals in the province to become a true learning campus that will better prepare our next generation of health care providers to obtain the skills required to better function in medium-sized health care operations.

With exponential growth and no room, the redevelopment project needs to get under way for the following reasons:

The current hospital was developed in the 1950s, with subsequent additions and renovations in the 1960s, 1970s, 1990s and 2000s, and is out of space. Most non-clinical staff have moved into external modular buildings in order to free up every inch of hospital space for patient care and clinical needs. The hospital has four portables to deal with the constant overcapacity.

Many of the major building systems will require renewal within the next few years. That's expensive and ongoing. Due to inadequate floor-to-floor heights and floor plate sizes, the building is ill suited to meet current clinical standards. Structurally, the hospital is unable to add additional floors to the existing building for growth. Due to poor area layouts, there are inefficiencies in staff time and a general sense of frustration.

When Ornge is required, the hospital has a single flight path for helicopters. Currently, safety regulations call for two flight paths. Power lines surrounding the hospital building are at a height that interferes with the flight path. As the helicopter lands—and this is something to see; I've seen it myself—the emergency department has to turn off the ventilation system, as the landing site is so close, the fumes would otherwise enter the building.

From a clinical perspective, there are great challenges.

There are substandard facilities in the emergency department for patients with mental illness or addiction issues, as some patients remain a number of days.

There is no space in the dialysis unit to expand. In order to accommodate two additional dialysis chairs, a closet was actually converted into a patient care area in the fall of 2015.

There is a lack of patient confidentiality due to the open-concept areas divided by curtains, instead of private rooms and recovery areas, and poor visibility to patient areas for nursing staff.

There is a lack of family support facilities such as quiet interview rooms and lounges for families when in a time of crisis. You literally have to have your family meeting in the hallway among all the gurneys and equipment.

For all of these points mentioned, it's imperative a redevelopment be approved in the near future.

Next, I want to talk about Stevenson Memorial Hospital in Alliston, and this brief was provided by the hospital.

Stevenson Memorial Hospital is a 38-bed progressive acute care community hospital serving south Simcoe. It

has received strong community support for its plans to construct a new hospital facility that will better serve the community's growing health care needs.

The hospital is dedicated to revitalizing and re-developing the facility to meet the needs of a community that has outgrown a facility that was constructed in 1964 and has had no major renovations since.

The 4,000-square-foot emergency department was made to accommodate 7,000 visits per year, yet in 2016-17, Stevenson saw over 36,000 patients in its emergency room. The facility is attempting to handle over five times the level of visits it was designed to handle.

Stevenson is committed to upgrading its emergency department. It is the "most relied-upon and essential service" at the hospital, accounting for over 50% of the total visits to the hospital. Alliston needs a facility that is over twice the size of Stevenson today. The emergency department is hard pressed to meet the needs of the community, and without addressing this, the community could be put at risk, especially if there is a critical outbreak of an infectious disease in the future.

There are other reasons the redevelopment of the hospital is necessary.

The hospital has emergency patients on stretchers in the hallway. This is not optimal care.

The hospital's current HVAC system is below industry standards.

Birthing suites need to be modernized, giving women in the community services that reflect best standards set by the province.

Mental health services in the Mary McGill building are developed in a building that does not meet accessibility standards set by the province and challenges the cornerstone of privacy and dignity of patients.

The hospital building has problems meeting the fire code. There are frequent fire and safety infractions because medical equipment has to be stored in the hallway. The hospital's electricity systems are at capacity, and newer technologies require upgrades.

Parking at the hospital is at overcapacity.

The ORs are severely dated and small for modern-day surgical practice.

The best answer to these issues is a redeveloped facility with modern infrastructure and services. These services would include a new emergency department and OR facilities, diagnostic imaging and lab, and refreshed in-patient and outpatient clinics.

Stevenson Memorial Hospital Foundation fully supports the efforts to develop the hospital and can meet the local share requirement of \$30 million.

By 2031, the population that Stevenson will serve is expected to grow from its current 55,000 to over 90,000. The hospital's services will be even more in demand because a large percentage of that 90,000 will be of an older demographic, making it even more critical that we get under way with the renovations and upgrades Stevenson needs.

I'd also like to mention that this hospital was recently recognized with an "exemplary" standing from Accredited

ation Canada for its operations. The hospital's operations were assessed and measured against national standards of excellence. Of the standards assessed, the hospital impressively met 1,782 of them. Only 18 were not met, and 51 were not applicable to that hospital. They met 100% of the required organizational practices.

1400

I hope this provides a good picture of the needs of the two hospitals, in the short time that I am allocated today. What I'm asking members of this House for today is this: Support my resolution that calls for the immediate approval of the planning grants for Collingwood General and Marine Hospital and Alliston's Stevenson Memorial Hospital.

This is not a partisan issue. This is about planning for the health care needs of Ontario today and in the future. I would ask all of the government members—I know it may be difficult to vote for expenditures in other people's ridings, but we are all here, and particularly government members, to represent all of the people of Ontario, as my predecessor George McCague would remind us if he were here today.

I do want to thank the government. Up to this point, you have let us go through stage 1. But each hospital, to get to stage 1, has had to spend slightly over \$1 million of their own money. They've had to use front-line patient care money in order to put the studies and the applications together.

We can't go to stage 2, let alone get all the way to stage 5, without a few million dollars each, for each hospital. Today, we were encouraged, during question period, by the Minister of Health to continue, but that's not possible without sending cheques.

We're not asking for the hundreds of millions that these two buildings will cost eventually. We're simply asking for the planning grants. We're willing to raise the money locally. We've got wonderful communities that fully support their hospitals. I hope you'll fully support us today.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: I appreciate the opportunity to stand and speak to this today. Mr. Wilson, the member from Simcoe-Grey, has spoken very clearly. He has spoken about the deficiencies that exist with these hospitals, deficiencies that have to be corrected.

As you may well be aware, Speaker, our health critic, the member from Nickel Belt, has spoken extensively about the shortcomings in the hospital systems in this province: how many hospitals don't have adequate facilities; how many hospitals put people in hallways. Frankly, she recently referenced a hospital where people on gurneys were pushed into a shower area. That was the accommodation that was available.

I had an opportunity a year ago to talk to one of my colleagues in Thunder Bay. The Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, their hospital, was at something like 110% capacity. They had people on stretchers and on gurneys in the television rooms. They had them in

whatever indoor space they could possibly stuff them in, so that they didn't get rained on.

That was the level: They don't get rained on? That's good. They're indoors, and they aren't freezing? That's good.

I think what the member has raised here, with the extensive list of problems that he has outlined—it's clear that investment has to go into these hospitals.

I'm not the person you would normally have speaking on rural hospital investment, but I have seen, in Toronto, situations in hospitals where people have been forced into hallways and kept there for extended periods of time.

It doesn't matter where you are in Ontario; you deserve a standard of health care that is acceptable to everyone. Because you're in a rural area, it doesn't mean that we can do that work or provide those services on the cheap. People in every community in Ontario deserve the same high-quality standard of health care, and Simcoe-Grey is no exception.

The member went through a list of a number of deficiencies in those hospital buildings, and I agree with him. My guess is, the staff do the absolute best they can. They would do, for the patients, everything within their power. But there is a limitation on what you can do when the buildings you're operating in are no longer providing the context, the environment, in which the proper job can be done.

The member noted a number of problems. He noted the inadequate floor-to-floor heights and floor plate sizes in the building, making it ill suited to meet current clinical standards.

In my riding, what was formerly the Riverdale Hospital, a rehab hospital—Speaker, you're well aware of the building I'm talking about—was a good building in its time, in the 1950s and 1960s.

And my guess is, this hospital was a good building in its time. But standards of care have changed. Our knowledge of what it takes to give people proper care—and you're familiar with the medical system, Speaker—to give the right amount of space for the movement of equipment and provision of care to patients means you have to have a different design. It isn't just putting equipment into a space; you need a space that's appropriate for that equipment.

The list of deficiencies in this hospital includes "no direct connect from the medical device repurposing department to the operating room." It's saying that staff then have to use the same block of elevators as the general public. Frankly, if you're going to make sure that equipment is clean and sterile and provides people with the service they need, you have to have that changed.

When you look at their list of deficiencies, there is a "lack of storage, overflowing into halls." Halls, which would generally be used for the storage of patients, don't have the room for equipment. Halls shouldn't generally be used for the storage of patients, but given what has been said, that's probably where they are, and they're cheek by jowl up against janitorial supplies and other material.

"Crowding in the main entry at registration, due to small space": You shouldn't have that. You just shouldn't have that. The space should be adequate for the purpose so that people have a good experience from the moment they arrive till the moment they leave. We want them to come out healthy. We want them to be treated properly. They deserve to be treated properly.

In addition to the problems that were outlined by the member, there's "poor visibility to patient areas for nursing staff." Well, why wouldn't you have proper visibility? It makes sense that if you're going to give people a high level of care, medical staff have to be able to survey all the patients who are there and be able to look after them.

Noting again from the list of deficiencies—I'll go to the Stevenson Memorial Hospital. If you look at the list of deficiencies, the hospital's current HVAC system is below industry standards. Standards change; equipment ages. Now is the time to bring it to modern standards so that people get the right temperature of air and the right level of humidity consistently so that they're assisted in getting better.

One of the things that is noted are the services in the Mary McGill building. Currently, that building has a lot of asbestos in it. My guess is that it has been isolated. But if you're actually going to do the work that's required to ensure there's proper space, you're going to have to deal with that. I've dealt with asbestos before, when I was a property manager, and it ain't cheap. It just is not cheap.

There's no question that those people in those buildings deserve good-quality and modern equipment, and they deserve it now.

So I want to thank the member for bringing forward this bill. I know it's his riding, but I think there's a principle here, and I talked about it earlier: Everyone in Ontario should have a high quality of medical care. It doesn't matter where you are, the quality of care has to be the same.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: It's great to get up and speak on this issue.

My colleague the MPP from Simcoe–Grey and I have, I think, a pretty good working relationship. I have been over there to visit him many times, and I hope to be there many other times.

This is not a partisan issue, as he stated. But there is a process involved. Infrastructure doesn't appear overnight.

All Ontarians—I agree with my colleagues—deserve access to high-quality, publicly funded health care. Nobody does not agree with that. We are investing in pharmacare, in hospitals, in home and community care, in long-term care, in mental health and in our world-class health care professionals—and that's important—including \$9 billion to support the construction of new major hospital projects across the province. Our government is committed to making capital investments across the health care sector. We will continue to work with our health care partners to assess needs based on sound fiscal

planning and guided by priorities for the health care system.

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All decisions our government makes regarding hospital and capital funding are based on the best evidence available to us. I do know that, in both areas that we're talking about, there is growth. I know that. There is good reason for it, and it's good news. Our government assesses many factors, such as community need, growth, hospital condition, and local health care needs when reviewing capital submissions. We also work with the local hospitals and community to follow a structured process for hospital infrastructure planning and development. A process, of course, means step by step. Sometimes, you're not able to skip steps in processes.

The Ministry of Health has received the capital submissions for both hospitals mentioned in this motion, in Collingwood and Alliston. Our government is taking the necessary steps to assess both projects. I was very pleased, when I made my announcement about additional money to hospitals, to have the CEO from Collingwood there. He was quite pleased about the money he was getting. Alliston was not there that day. I think I've made a couple of phone calls there, over the last year, with good news, and that news was well received. We will continue to work with both hospitals, the local LHIN and local health care partners to ensure that local residents have access to the care that they need.

Between June 2015 and July 2016, the ministry, the LHIN and the Stevenson Memorial Hospital were actively engaged in review of the stage 1 proposal submission. The capital planning and review process typically involves multiple exchanges to ensure that the ministry's and the LHIN's concerns are addressed such that all factors that could affect a proposed project are satisfied prior to proceeding with detailed planning.

The LHIN board endorsed stage 1, part A—program and service elements—on September 27, 2016. While the ministry's review does not constitute ministry approval for the project or an approval to move to the next stage, the ministry remains committed to making capital investments across the health care sector and will continue to work with the LHIN to assess needs based on sound fiscal planning, guided by its priorities for the health care system.

Collingwood General and Marine Hospital: Since March 2016, the ministry has met with CGMH to receive updates on their planning activities. The hospital has worked with the LHIN in preparing the stage 1 proposal submission, and submitted it to the ministry in September 2016. The submission is currently under ministry review. At this time, there is no agreement on the project scope or ministry approval for the replacement hospital proposal to move forward.

However, again, while the ministry's review does not constitute ministry approval for the project or an approval to move to the next stage, the ministry remains committed to making capital investments across the health care sector and will continue to work with the

LHINs to assess needs based on sound fiscal planning, guided by its priorities for the health care system. The ministry's health capital division receives proposals for capital projects from health service providers via their respective LHIN, and reviews planning submissions at various stages of development to ensure the proposed project is developed in accordance with provincial standards.

Again, all Ontarians deserve high-quality publicly funded health care. Unfortunately, all infrastructure can't be taken care of at the same time. As I said, there is a process. Our government is making the important investments our health care system needs. If the member from Simcoe-Grey thinks that our government should invest more in Ontario hospitals, then perhaps he and his colleagues should have voted for the budget.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I'm proud to rise and support my colleague from Simcoe-Grey, Jim Wilson. I appreciate the opportunity to do so.

As health critic of the party, I am fully supportive of this request from Mr. Wilson. We look at him in our caucus as a true leader of our party, not only serving as House leader since I've been elected at this Legislature, but in the meantime, he did serve as our interim leader, and I do commend him. He did an amazing job in the year that he served.

We also have to remember that Mr. Wilson served as Minister of Health and Minister of Energy during his time, and Minister of the Environment as well. He has a wealth of knowledge and understanding of how the government operates and what problems do arise.

I think that this request he has brought forth for Collingwood General and Marine Hospital and Stevenson Memorial Hospital is to help the communities pay for the process in order to get to the final stage to get the approval to build these new hospitals. I don't think that's a lot to ask, especially when you're going to smaller communities in the riding. For them to come up with millions upon millions of dollars—this money doesn't come out of trees; it comes out of either the donations of their communities or—what's happening right now—their operational costs.

When the government opposite mentions their investment in the hospitals, we do know that the true fact is that much of that money they're putting in isn't going to the base operating costs of the hospitals in this province, so that's going to continually degrade the system. Now we have a system where the Collingwood hospital especially is going to be pulling out funds from their operating costs just to do the process from the bureaucracy created by this government.

We only have to look as far as when this member from Simcoe-Grey was the Minister of Health. He had three deputy ministers working under him.

Interjection: Assistant.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: Assistant deputy ministers, excuse me. This government has over 20 working in the bureau-

cracy of the Ministry of Health. That is money that could be going to the front line. That is money that could be going to the rebuilding of our hospitals, but instead, it's stuck inside the ministry, being spent on itself, creating a process which is costing the operating costs of this system.

Madam Speaker, I toured—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay. It's never too early to warn or name anybody. You know who you are. You've already been warned.

I'm going to return to the member from Elgin-Middlesex-London.

Mr. Jeff Yurek: I toured Collingwood last year—the member from Simcoe-Grey brought me up—and I saw the portables that they have to deal with when working. The staff I met, the management and the clinicians, are top-notch, wanting to do the best job they can. But we need to have a government that supports that, and that's why we're supporting this resolution, so that they can move on with the process.

The area is growing with tourism. The hospitals have to be prepared for the influx of people in the summer and in the winter months due to problems occurring, either on the ski slopes or in the water. We're hoping that this government can move this situation on further, because the last thing we would like to see, and would hate to see, is another SARS epidemic perhaps hitting the area, and these hospitals being unable to provide the service because they're still dealing with facilities back from the 1950s and 1960s.

Madam Speaker, I'm urging the government to support the legislation brought forth by the member from Simcoe-Grey. The PC caucus supports this resolution. Let's get the grant money to these communities so that they can go forward and get these hospitals built.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House, today to support the motion put forward by the member from Simcoe-Grey.

First of all, I've disagreed many times philosophically with the member from Simcoe-Grey, because this is a partisan place, but I have had the opportunity—

Mr. Jim Wilson: I thought you were a Tory.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order.

Mr. John Vanthof: I have had the opportunity to work with him many times, because he has been House leader, and I am the whip of our party. I have learned a great deal from him, from his many years of work in this place. He has a very in-depth knowledge of his riding and of the people he represents, and I truly appreciate having dealt with him. On top of that, he has got an incredible sense of humour, and he is very good at doing what he is doing today: working for the people of his riding and working for the issues that are important.

Maintenance of hospitals and construction of new ones, when necessary, is important across the province, and I am sure it is one of the issues that is very relevant

in his riding. That's why he's going to the effort of putting forward a private member's motion to bring attention to that. I commend him for that.

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It's also my job as a representative from my area to spend a few minutes talking about hospitals in my area, and I have seven. In northern Ontario, our population is small per kilometre but our kilometres are large; the number of kilometres is large. My riding is about seven hours long and five hours wide in driving time. My seven hospitals, I'm going to name them just so—I'm also representing my folks.

In Cochrane, I've got the Lady Minto Hospital. In Iroquois Falls, I've got Anson General Hospital. In Matheson is the Bingham Memorial Hospital. Those three hospitals are governed by one group, the MICs Group. They did this years ago, before people started talking about amalgamating things. The leadership of these three hospitals thought, "You know what? We can provide better service to our resident base if we consolidate administration," which they did. They were years ahead of the curve, and it's not easy, but they have been leaders in that area. I'd like to commend them for that.

Other hospitals in my area are Kirkland and District Hospital, and Englehart and District Hospital. I used to be on the board of Englehart and District Hospital. They are also in the process of amalgamating their administration under Blanche River Health Partners. If you go down the road another half an hour, you will come to the Temiskaming Hospital. If you go down the road another two hours, you will have the West Nipissing General Hospital.

Those seven hospitals are—as, I'm sure, the hospitals in Mr. Wilson's riding are—often the only place where help is available 24 hours a day. That's what makes hospitals so incredibly important in rural Ontario.

We find, and we know, that a lot of the services that people take for granted in urban populations—which they deserve; I am not anti-urban population at all, but a lot of those services aren't available in rural and northern Ontario. The only service that's available, the only lights that are on 24 hours a day, seven days a week, are the lights at the hospital. That's why it's so important to make sure that for hospitals across the province—big ones, highly specialized ones, medium-sized ones that serve small cities, smaller ones and the tiny ones—we realize the different roles that they fill, how important they are to their populations and how, by working together, they create a part of a health care system of which we can all be truly proud.

In closing our portion, once again I would like to commend the member—I know him as Jim, but the member from Simcoe–Grey—on bringing this forward, so we all have an opportunity to talk about what is important. This is truly a non-partisan issue. He is trying to bring light to his area; I brought light to mine. We have philosophical differences both with his party and certainly with the government, but we should all work together on issues like this, and that's why we are in strong support of this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure to speak to the motion put forward by the member from Simcoe–Grey, whom I've had the opportunity to work with on a few things and gotten to know over my time in the Legislature. I also know that he's a former Minister of Health, so he understands these things really, really well. I do want to start by commending him for putting forward a motion and supporting his community.

I want to talk a little bit about the capital planning process. I, too, have been on the end of that process, working for a member and as a member. As the member across would know, it is a very deliberative and multi-stage process.

I know I have become impatient with it at times, and I understand that my community has. But I have also come to understand, in the work that I have been able to do here as the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, the reason for that deliberative process, which is you're building a facility that has to meet the needs for sometimes 30, 40, 50 years. You want to make sure you get not just the design of your building right, and your community contribution in place, but also what the needs of your population are going to be. Who else is in that environment?

It's an iterative process that goes back and forth and back and forth. I know the member opposite, and other members opposite, have probably seen this as well. I think that process, as impatient as I have been with it at times, is critical to make sure that we get it right, and critical to make sure that that investment—because we're often talking about tens or hundreds of millions of dollars that are being invested in health care—will be spent rightly and correctly.

While I commend the member for bringing it forward, I also recognize that we have to get it right and that there is an issue of balance.

We all have needs in health care in our communities. I think every member here could stand up and speak for 10 minutes about what they need for their communities, about what their communities are asking them to bring forward.

I'm sure that all the members opposite know as well that it's all about choices and planning. Those choices are not always easy or black and white, and sometimes they are not exactly what a community envisions. But what you end up with, once you make the right choice by informing yourself, is the best investment that you can make for your community.

Speaker, I do want to say a few things about the investments in the budget that we put forward, especially with regard to capital over the next 10 years in hospitals across Ontario. There's another \$9 billion in this budget, over the next 10 years, bringing to \$20 billion the investments in capital in hospitals over the next 10 years. That's a lot of money. That's a historic investment, and I think that will serve the people of the province well.

As well, I think it's also critical, in terms of choices, the choices that we made in this budget with regard to

health care by investing more money in the operational increase for hospitals this year, but also in OHIP+, pharmacare for children and youth. If you're under 25, after January 1, you bring your prescription to the pharmacy, you bring your OHIP card and you leave—no deductible, no copayment. That's a choice that we made, and I think it's a critical choice that will support families in Ontario in a way that has never been done before.

As importantly, that's a clear statement about the need for us to get to universal pharmacare. I think that's critical. I think it's critical in this country that we all come together, all provinces and the federal government, using some leadership, to ensure that every Canadian, every Ontarian, has access to the medications they need. That's really what universality is all about. Medications and pharmacy play a bigger role in the cure of disease and the maintenance of health than they ever did before.

When we look at the budget and we look at the investments that we've made, we know that there are choices, and we must make those choices well. We must get the information that we need to make the right choices.

While I can understand the member's sentiment and his advocacy for his community, I think that we have to look at the processes that we put in place which ensure that we spend that money wisely and invest in communities, not only for their needs of today but of tomorrow and on.

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The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mrs. Julia Munro: It's my pleasure to be able to rise today to speak to the resolution brought forward by the member for Simcoe-Grey. This resolution calls on the government to step forward to provide planning grants to get started on the next stage of development. Other speakers have made reference to this, so understand at this point, when I'm speaking about it, it's the same planning grants.

Both Collingwood and Alliston hospitals have completed stage 1. Both of these hospitals have the support of their respective LHINs. I'm here today to join in supporting my colleague the member for Simcoe-Grey in his pursuit to lead the change.

I have to disclose my bias, though. As the member for York-Simcoe, I know how important the Stevenson Memorial Hospital is to many of my constituents, yet people realize Stevenson Memorial has many deficiencies.

It was designed to serve 7,000 people back in 1964; that's 50-plus years ago. When you think of the kinds of medical technology and resources that are available to us, if we can afford them, if we can get to building and things like that—the point is that the dispensing of medical care and the population growth are two things at loggerheads here. Such examples include meeting the standards of the fire code. With the current hospital building, it's problematic as it has been grandfathered. Medical surgical rooms are below needed space standards, again forcing medical equipment into the hallways

and compromising patient privacy and infection standards. The hospital electricity systems are at capacity, and newer technologies require upgrades to the electrical infrastructure to keep standard. These are sort of the bread-and-butter fundamentals of being able to provide this kind of health care in the 21st century, so we're not looking at anything more than what people have come to understand are the important tools and technology of the kind of medical services that we're providing. It even gets down to the parking lot and leaving patients and visitors aimlessly wandering to find their parking spot.

In the few moments that I have, I want to also express my gratitude to the hard-working staff at Stevenson Memorial who work to serve our communities despite these challenges. Most of all, I want them to have the tools that they need to succeed when it comes to looking after those who need it most, and some of them are my constituents. Let's get Stevenson Memorial to the next stage so they can do what they do best: provide care to our communities.

I'd also like to end my remarks with a quote from Simcoe's warden, Warden Marshall: "Building a long-term plan to ensure Simcoe county residents have access to the health care services they deserve is vital for the well-being of our communities. When all levels of government come together to create sustainable success for our health care centres and long-term-care facilities, everyone wins."

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to stand in support of my esteemed colleague and the former Minister of Health from Simcoe-Grey.

Similar to him, we've had, at the Markdale hospital—14 years in the making. With Markdale, the residents have worked very hard to raise \$12 million for their new hospital. That new Markdale hospital is very similar to Collingwood and Alliston's Stevenson Memorial. It was a deteriorating facility. It needed a new building to ensure the safety, the health, and the early diagnosis and care which is paramount to everyone, Madam Speaker.

I want to thank the current minister, Minister Hoskins, for recommitting and making sure we're moving forward with that, and it is moving forward. We are actually in stage 2. I'm going to hold him to his word to make sure that it does go forward, that we do actually build Markdale. I believe they're looking at a 2020-21 time frame. Facility operational start dates for the new hospital will be confirmed at a later capital planning stage, so we're in a relatively similar process that my colleague is going for. I commend him. As a former minister, he absolutely knows what needs to be done. He was in charge of our hospitals and did a great job at that point to ensure we had that care.

Particularly in our small rural communities, it is truly the lifeblood of the community. People need that care. They need timely access to care. They need facilities that they can depend on that are close to home, not just because of their own care, but for the ability of their

families, the spinoff economics from all of the staff that are there—and we all have wonderful staff in our small rural hospitals. But paramount to everything is absolutely the quality care close to home.

I applaud him. I hope the government will forget anything of partisan reality and say, “This is what’s needed.” If they can find \$25 billion to give short-term hydro relief, surely to goodness they can find money for a planning grant for both the Collingwood hospital and Alliston’s Stevenson Memorial.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: As always, it’s an honour to stand in this place and represent the fine constituents of Niagara West—Glanbrook. It’s especially an honour today to rise and speak in support of the member for Simcoe–Grey’s motion, a very valuable motion that draws attention to the importance of renewing infrastructure, especially health care infrastructure, in our rural communities, and in this case specifically the planning grant requested by the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital in the town of Collingwood and the Stevenson Memorial Hospital in the town of New Tecumseth.

Madam Speaker, I was fascinated to hear him speak about how these hospitals were built in the late 1950s and early 1960s because, as we know, in my community of Niagara West—Glanbrook we have the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital which was built in 1948. So, honourable member, I think I should have precedence when it comes to new hospitals.

I want to commend him for the excellent work that he’s done promoting this. Obviously these hospitals are fundamentally important to the fabric and the basis of communities, and in this case more remote communities. The health care that is provided needs to not only come across in, as he said, a tender, loving manner, but also one that has the capacity and the modern equipment that is deserved by people across the province.

Madam Speaker, in my riding of Niagara West—Glanbrook, as I’ve said, the West Lincoln Memorial Hospital has been pushed for for years. We’ve been bringing petitions forward to the Legislature; we’ve spoken about this before on opposition day motions. In my community we’ve fundraised over \$14 million towards a new redevelopment, and I think this motion just brings to the fore the importance of ensuring we have those health care resources at the disposal of these rapidly growing rural communities.

I want to really take the time to thank all those who came out today from the riding of Bruce–Grey. This is obviously something that’s very important to a lot of members in that community. I want to again commend the member from Bruce–Grey for—

Mr. Bill Walker: Simcoe–Grey.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: Simcoe–Grey; my apologies. My seatmate is from Bruce–Grey—for his dedication to his community and his hard work when it comes to health care, and in his prior tenure as the Minister of Health.

I look forward to supporting this motion, and I encourage all members to do so in this House.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I will return to the member from Simcoe–Grey to wrap up.

Mr. Jim Wilson: Thank you to the eight speakers. I won’t go through all their names, but thank you very much from the bottom of my heart. On behalf of my constituents and the people of Simcoe–Grey, we very much appreciate the thoughtful words, the very kind words.

I just want to wrap up by saying, you talk about the need for hospitals, certainly in small-town rural Ontario. They were all built at about the same. My hospitals, though, have never had any major renovations, particularly Stevenson Memorial—nothing done, basically. Collingwood, very little done; the last renovation it got was a bit of a facelift when I was Minister of Health, Madam Speaker. It had a \$16-million small redevelopment done there. The buildings, as I said, are overdue.

The way we look at it in Simcoe county is, in my 27 years Barrie has been done twice. I opened the first Barrie hospital. Bob Rae built it, but I opened the first new RVH. I attended the opening recently of the second RVH. Orangeville has been done; Mike Harris and I opened Orangeville in 1996, I believe. I was Minister of Health. Owen Sound has been done in my time. These are all of the hospitals that my constituents go to if they don’t go to Collingwood or Alliston.

Newmarket’s been done several times—cardiac specialties down there now. I was part of the team that made the decision to put the cancer bunkers in Newmarket and Barrie at the same time. Barrie is now doing advanced cardiology, or just starting advanced cardiology.

1440

I’m glad you mentioned the warden; I want to thank the warden of the county. When I talk with him, we agree, and county council agrees, that Collingwood and Alliston are the ones in the middle—they’re actually in the riding of Simcoe–Grey. Everyone has been done around us over the last 25 years—brand new facilities. We’re overdue.

I want to thank the county for their support, because I didn’t do it in my 12-minute remarks. We’re number one on their list, both hospitals equally, in terms of the tens of millions that they’re going to put forward, because they recognize that the Simcoe–Grey hospitals need to be done, and they need to be done sooner rather than later.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We will vote on this item at the end of private members’ public business.

VISITORS

Mrs. Julia Munro: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I heard there’s a point of order.

Mrs. Julia Munro: I would like to beg your indulgence to make a brief announcement that grade 8

students from W.J. Watson in Keswick have joined us here this afternoon.

STOP THE CALLS ACT, 2017
LOI DE 2017 SUR LES APPELS
INDÉSIRABLES

Mr. Baker moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 137, An Act to prohibit unsolicited phone calls for the purpose of selling, leasing, renting or advertising prescribed products or services / *Projet de loi 137, Loi interdisant les appels non sollicités visant à vendre, à donner à bail, à louer ou à annoncer des produits ou services prescrits.*

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

Mr. Yvan Baker: It's an honour to be able to speak to this private member's bill.

Last year around this time, I introduced a private member's bill to ban door-to-door sales of certain products to protect consumers from aggressive, coercive or misleading sales practices at the door. Recently, the government adopted my private member's bill as part of Bill 59, the Putting Consumers First Act. Ultimately, that act, Bill 59 which we passed this spring, banned unsolicited door-to-door sales.

Recently, I've been talking to my constituents about Bill 59 and the ban on unsolicited door-to-door sales. I've been talking to them when I knock on doors; I've been talking to them at my seniors' advisory group meeting. When I mention that ban on unsolicited door-to-door sales, almost all of my constituents tell me the same thing: "Okay, great. That's really good news. That's great work on door-to-door, but can you stop the salespeople from calling my home? Can you stop the phone calls?"

I started talking to constituents about this issue, and I began hearing from constituent after constituent who told me stories about receiving unwanted or harassing phone calls from telemarketers, who call them up to four to five times a day, every day, and who use aggressive tactics to sell them products that they don't want or need. Many are calling to sell air conditioning, window repair services, roof repair, financial services, long-distance plans and a number of others, but the one that I hear about the most by far is duct cleaning services.

I hear from people everywhere in my community who are complaining about getting four to five calls a day from people trying to sell them duct cleaning services. I don't know how often we're supposed to get our ducts cleaned, but I can guarantee you it's not four to five times a day.

Many consumers have said that they are on the federal do-not-call list. They shouldn't be receiving telemarketing calls at all, but they receive them anyway. Many ask the company to add them to their do-not-call list, which under federal regulations they should be doing, and they don't do that anyway.

A lot of these telemarketing companies, particularly the ones selling duct cleaning, completely ignore the federal do-not-call list and don't establish their own do-not-call list or don't abide by them. As a result, I've heard from far too many consumers who are harassed by telemarketers, who call them multiple times a day, every day, and use aggressive sales tactics to sell them services that they don't want or they don't need.

It's disgraceful to me that we have businesses that have a business model that's based on harassing consumers into compliance, that's based on harassing consumers into buying products, and frankly, taking advantage of vulnerable consumers. This bill is about taking action on this very issue to end this predatory practice. It's about protecting Ontarians from these harassing phone calls. This bill is taking action to stop the phone calls.

This private member's bill, the Stop the Calls Act, would ban telemarketing for products and services that have resulted in consumers receiving countless unwanted and harassing phone calls. If passed, the bill would ban certain products and services from being sold as the result of an unsolicited phone call to a consumer. This means that if a company calls a consumer and it's unsolicited—the company did not have permission to call in the first place, in advance, from the consumer—then any sale that results from that call, even if it happens subsequent to that phone call, is disallowed.

Should the company contravene the ban and sell products or services to a consumer, the first thing that would happen is that the contract or the sale with the consumer would immediately be void. In addition, the consumer would be entitled to be paid back all the money that they've paid under the contract, and the return or replacement of any product that was taken under the contract, if that applies. Stiff penalties would be put in place for offenders who violate the ban. Individuals who are responsible for the sale of the product or service, or the signing of the contract, would be fined up to \$2,000 per incident, and the companies responsible would be fined up to \$25,000 per incident.

Finally, if the consumer does not receive payment, they have the option of taking the company to court and, if successful, receiving double the amount that they were owed, plus legal fees.

The voiding of the contract; the requirement to return the consumer's money; and the stiff fines that would be placed upon the company would make telemarketing of these specific products and services prohibitively expensive. That's what would stop many of the harassing and unwanted calls that consumers receive, because these telemarketing businesses that propagate these calls could no longer make money selling products this way.

My goal here is not to go after everybody. It's not to stop the good, honest salespeople. It's not meant to stop the young student who is trying to make money and calls you once a year to clean your windows. It's not meant to stop the young person who is selling newspapers and calls around and asks if they can add you to their delivery

route. I'm not talking about those. We're talking about the bad actors who call people multiple times a day every day, multiple times a week, who are really just trying to harass people into buying their products.

We're trying to focus this, so what I have done in the bill is give the Minister of Government and Consumer Services the authority, through regulation, to select the products and services that would be banned. The minister could select which products and services this ban on telemarketing sales would apply to.

The other thing that I've included in the bill is certain exemptions. Certain sales originating by phone would be allowed. These would include calls from businesses that have an existing or a recent relationship with the consumer. The bill would also exempt businesses that have previously received consent from consumers to call them. If you've called a business and enquired about a product, and they call you back, and then you ultimately buy that product, that's okay. That's exempted under the bill.

If you have an established contract with a company, if you have an existing service with a company, and they call you and then upsell you, or sell you a different product, that's okay. That's allowed under this bill.

If you had a contract recently with a company, or you've dealt with them recently, or recently had a sale of a product, and then they call you again and you buy something, that's allowed under this contract.

What we are talking about here is this: We are exempting those folks who are doing ongoing, reasonable business with consumers. We're also giving exemptions to charities, to non-profits, to political parties and candidates. They would all be exempted. This is focused on those for-profit telemarketers who are harassing consumers and calling them repetitively, non-stop.

One of the questions I get from a lot of people is, "Isn't this federal jurisdiction?" The regulation of telecommunications and telemarketing falls under federal jurisdiction; that is true. It's not under the province's jurisdiction to say who can and cannot call a consumer. But the province is allowed to outline conditions under which a contract or sale can be agreed to or can be completed. The Stop the Calls Act doesn't ban phone calls from coming in. We can't do that here at the provincial Legislature; the government of Ontario can't do that. The Stop the Calls Act bans sales or contracts resulting from an unsolicited call. That's how the bill works.

Speaker, I have been told by a lot of consumers, a lot of constituents, that a lot of the unwanted or harassing phone calls that they receive come from beyond Canadian borders. This bill would actually protect them against those calls as well.

No matter where telemarketers are based, they are striving to sell you a product or service on behalf of a company here in Canada. If you think about it, the duct cleaning company, the company that wants to repair your windows or repair your roof, and the long-distance company are all Canadian-based companies that have hired telemarketing companies to sell their products.

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My bill would void the contract with the Canadian company and require that they return the consumer's money and pay a fine. This would make it prohibitively expensive for the company here in Canada to hire telemarketers to sell their products, and that's what would stop the calls.

Not only would the Stop the Calls Act be a deterrent to businesses that are using these harassing techniques; it would also give consumers a lot more confidence in dealing with illegitimate scammers.

Take, for example, the "Can you hear me?" scam. I'm sure some of us in this Legislature have heard about this or have been targeted by this. Scammers will call a consumer, asking "Can you hear me? Can you hear me?" at the start of the conversation. Upon responding with "Yes," the consumer's voice is then often recorded and edited to sound as though the consumer has agreed to purchase a product or service. While the consumer would not be liable to fulfill any such duty, this is often used as an intimidation factor to scare consumers into fulfilling false contract obligations.

The Stop the Calls Act actually gives consumers the peace of mind of knowing that they can't be forced into a contract, regardless of what they say on the phone, because it came as the result of an unsolicited phone call.

The Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, which is a federal government agency, also warns consumers about a number of different scams: the time-share scam, for example, that lures potential customers with free stays at time-shares in exchange for the client agreeing to simply sit through a time-share presentation. However, problems can arise once you agree to buy the property.

Mr. Mike Colle: A free lunch.

Mr. Yvan Baker: That's right: a free lunch, as the member for Eglinton-Lawrence says.

Time-share scams range from hidden booking or maintenance fees, to more extreme cases such as companies suddenly going out of business, once they secure your hefty deposit, leaving you without a time-share.

The Stop the Calls Act will give consumers the right to get out of those misleading agreements where they have signed a contract.

This won't stop all scams. This bill can't stop all scams. But it will stop those scams where a consumer has signed a contract with a Canadian-based company.

I'm sure you're familiar with vacation-based scams as well. Here, the victim receives a cold call; it's automated. They say, "Hey, you've won a vacation." We have all received these phone calls. Or they're told that as a preferred customer, they've been awarded a credit or a discount on a destination vacation if they book right away. Once the potential victim proceeds with the call, they will be asked to provide personal information, like a credit card and that sort of thing, to book a vacation and to make a deposit to guarantee the trip.

The Stop the Calls Act gives consumers the protection of being able to leave these deals, regardless of what they say or agree to over the phone, because the sale came as

the result of an unsolicited call, Speaker. Not only would this bill help protect consumers against those harassing phone calls four to five times a day, every day, or once a day, every day, multiple times a week—certainly, it would stop those calls. But it would also help, in some selective cases, with some of those scams where sales are completed, where consumers are defrauded or convinced into signing a fraudulent agreement.

I have heard from too many consumers in my community of Etobicoke Centre who are harassed by telemarketers who call them multiple times a day, every day, and use aggressive tactics to sell them services or products they don't need or want.

To me, it's absolutely disgraceful that some organizations have a business model that is based on harassing consumers into buying their products. I think we need to take action to protect Ontario consumers from this, and my bill would do just that. It's time to stop the calls.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm proud to get up on behalf of my residents of Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry to comment on Bill 137, An Act to prohibit unsolicited phone calls for the purpose of selling, leasing, renting or advertising prescribed products or services.

Speaker, it's a novel idea to try to stop the calls. Everybody has experienced some calls that are annoying. You're sitting down at dinner.

I have to give credit to the federal government, which has a do-not-call list in place. It can actually stop those calls from coming in.

We look at the scope of this bill. Trying to get to the point where it can actually be effective will require a lot more resources on the law enforcement side, that this government has not made available.

I heard the member opposite talk about the fraudsters and scammers. There are ways of stopping those calls, but it takes resources and law enforcement.

At this point, when I see the number of times, and just again today, that an email comes through to our constituency office asking us to provide personal information—and it's obviously a scam, wanting you to put a bank account number or something in. Those are coming through all the time. I don't see the education out there that I think the public needs to identify these as what they are, as very dangerous scams. If you put your email address and a password in—as soon as you're asked for a password or credit card information, you should be very wary of what's going on.

The red tape that goes along with this would be horrendous. Although it's an idea that has some merit, I think that it needs a lot more work. Certainly, before we can support it in its final form, we would be looking for amendments.

Again, I encourage the member, being of the government, to look at the overall problem of what's happening here. If there are these annoying and fraudulent calls coming through, I think it's time that we put the resources in to actually attacking that issue. Attack it head-on.

We have very good law enforcement officers, but we don't give them the time and the funding to allow them to actually have an impact on that huge issue.

I don't think anybody in this House would have not received some of these fraudulent calls or emails so far.

Anyway, I look forward to hearing more of the debate. I know there are lots of people who want to talk on this issue.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mrs. Gila Martow: I'm very pleased to rise and speak on Bill 137, Stop the Calls Act.

The member opposite who presented this mentioned that last year he had a bill, which I believe I also spoke to, to ban door-to-door sales. This does fit in very nicely with that bill. At that time, when he spoke to his constituents about the door-to-door sales ban, he heard, "What about those annoying phone calls that we get all day long? Why can't you do something about that?" So my question to him would be, why didn't he include that in his door-to-door sales bill? This bill, as he said, is not really focused on stopping the calls, because that is a federal issue; this is more about stopping the sales, meaning cancelling the sales.

I'm wondering if a lot of these sales are to vulnerable people, older people, people who maybe need a little bit of extra help from the community. Maybe we need to have a sign-up list of vulnerable people that's more extensive—because there are people who now are on somewhat of a vulnerable list, if they're under protection, if a relative has power of authority and things like that.

My question is, what have we done about education? I'm concerned about spending money on more bureaucracy and, as the member beside me said, more red tape. That's money that's taken out of front-line health care, education and other important things. Maybe what we need to do is to better educate the public through our newsletters and through our websites and warn people to protect themselves by asking for more information and not agreeing to anything on the phone.

I hope that we're going to be hearing from many community members and stakeholders about this issue. I think this is something that we think about as legislators. Often, when we receive those calls, we picture people in our communities who are dealing with it and struggling and maybe being left paying for a hot water tank, or something, that they don't need.

The member mentioned that a lot of the calls are for duct cleaning—at first, I thought he was talking about cleaning big inflatable ducks, but then I realized he meant duct cleaning. I've had a lot of calls about duct cleaning as well. What I advise the people who complain to me about these kinds of calls is to always say, "I have a service that I use for all my home repairs," or "I have a gardening service that I use." That cuts them off the line very quickly.

Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I want to wish everybody a very happy, healthy and rewarding summer.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I want to thank the member for bringing this bill forward. I think this bill does address an issue that we've heard a number of times, and I think it's important to touch on that issue. There are certainly people in many constituencies across this province and in my riding—I can speak to the stories that I've heard about vulnerable people who are caught up in sales tactics that are often aggressive and high-pressure at the door, which result in people signing contracts which are not really helping them out in the long run, and which are quite hurtful.

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In addition, though, we know that there are high-pressure tactics by phone, and it's important to address those. We know that there are people of various backgrounds—whether they're seniors, people with language barriers, people who are taken advantage of—and we need to absolutely protect those people.

At the same time, it's important to acknowledge that the people who are working in these telemarketing positions are often themselves people who are racialized or vulnerable. We have to look at what has resulted, what conditions this government has created that have left people having to find this type of employment. There are no other forms of employment for many people, and we need to talk about that. Many of the people we want to protect—people with language barriers, people who are vulnerable—are the people who rely on some of these jobs that are created by telemarketing, so we need to ensure that this bill doesn't end up resulting in those people losing their jobs as well.

Why are these conditions existing right now in this province? Why do these conditions exist? The problem is this: The government has failed in this province to create the conditions for good work. People deserve good work. People have the right to good work. But the government has not allowed for those conditions, has not created the conditions for good work. In fact, what this government has encouraged is precarious work.

One particular topic of precarious work, which has been one of the top issues in my riding, is temporary job agencies. Many of the folks who are vulnerable in our society have to work through agencies. They can't find a job. And these are citizens. These are people here in Ontario who can't find employment unless they go through an agency. But the problem is that the agency often claws back as much as half of the pay of the person who works for that agency. They often don't see any benefits at all, and they face significant barriers to getting hired permanently.

None of this needs to happen. None of this should happen. If someone is hired through an agency, the client company should pay a premium, but it shouldn't be the case that the employee has to see half of their pay being clawed back. That's just unfair. But this government has allowed this to continue. In fact, over the past decade, temporary job agencies across this province have proliferated.

They have grown significantly, and they have all grown because this government has allowed it to happen.

So what do we need to see happen? We need to see protections for workers so that they receive the same pay as their colleagues. We need to ensure that there aren't barriers, that people do not see barriers to getting hired directly. Right now, if you're working through an agency at a client company, you're doing a great job and the client company wants to hire that person, they have to pay a penalty fee to the agency. That's what's going on right now. That's unacceptable.

In addition, we see that there are no benefits given, and people go through this revolving door of employment, where they work at a client company, then they're let go and hired back on, and they end up working at the same client company for six months, a year, two years at a time. They're continually working at the same client company. What we need to see happen is that after a certain amount of cumulative work, we need people to get hired directly.

But it's more than that. There are folks who come to this province with tremendous skill sets who don't see their talent, their international training and education, recognized by this government. This is not an issue that has just popped up this year or last year; this government has had over a decade—14 years—to address this issue, and still we have extremely qualified people, who have so much to give, who are not being actualized. Their potential, their capacity, their skill set is not being realized, because this government hasn't implemented a program, a policy to recognize their training.

There are still too many barriers to education. This province is one of the provinces that provides the least level of funding to post-secondary education, and we have some of the highest tuition fees in the country. We need to tear down these barriers so people can get the education and skill set they need so that they can go on to find good employment.

This government needs to make strategic investments in industries, in technologies that are sustainable, that are long-lasting, and to encourage a workforce that's able to find good work because of the investments this government can make but hasn't made. We need to be innovative. We need to be creative with those investments. It can be done.

Again, the bill addresses an issue—

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I understand the member from Barrie has a point of order.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Yes. I wonder which one of the three private members' bills the member is talking about.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): That's not a point of order.

I just want to remind the member that we are debating the member's bill from Etobicoke Centre dealing with phone calls. Let's return back to the member.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. It's absolutely important that we acknowledge the importance of this issue, that people be protected, that

consumers be protected. We also need to make sure we don't create a scenario where people who rely on these jobs aren't left without any employment whatsoever, and we need to make sure that there are opportunities for those folks as well.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate? I recognize the Minister of Government and Consumer Services.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's great to see you in the chair again, as always.

I'm very pleased, as the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, to speak to Stop the Calls Act, 2017, a private member's bill brought forward by my colleague from Etobicoke Centre.

I have to agree, of course—I think we can all agree—that unsolicited phone calls can be a source of frustration and great concern, if that leads to some sort of deceptive or misleading practice. Our government is committed to maintaining a fair market and protecting consumers faced with aggressive and deceptive business practices. At the same time, we recognize there are legitimate businesses that need to continue to operate.

We recently had a number of steps that have gone forward to protect consumers from being harmed through unsolicited door-to-door sales, through our enhanced protections under payday-lending legislation, and we're moving on regulating the home inspection industry. I see this bill as an extension of the door-to-door piece from Bill 59, and I want to thank my colleague for bringing this very important bill forward.

Any bill that enhances consumer protection is not just good for the consumer, but it's good for Ontario, it's good for our economy. Consumer confidence leads to a stronger economy. One thing I asked is, how many complaints do we get about these kinds of phone calls? My ministry was able to do some research. There have been over 400 inquiries just on this issue of telemarketing alone since 2014. I know that may not seem like a huge number, but we have to remember, too, that not everybody calls to complain about a specific issue to the consumer protection branch.

As MPPs, we're all pretty familiar with this issue in our own ridings, especially when some of these practices target our most vulnerable consumers, whether they're seniors, whether they are Ontarians where English isn't the first language and so on.

I want to congratulate the member for bringing this forward. There are, of course, some pieces to look at in regulations as this moves forward, but as I see it, it's enhancing the protection we already have in Ontario. It builds on the good work he's done and other members have done in private members' bills and in Bill 59 to enhance consumer protection.

I really look forward to seeing this being passed, and I hope it enjoys the support of the House this afternoon.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: It's an honour to be able to stand in this House again and speak to An Act to prohibit

unsolicited phone calls for the purpose of selling, leasing, renting or advertising prescribed products or services.

I want to thank the member for Etobicoke Centre for bringing forward this piece of legislation, which I'm very sure is brought forward with the best of intent and for the most noble of purposes, which is to prevent, quite frankly, the unsolicited exploitation of those who do not wish to have their privacy invaded and who wish to be free from annoying telemarketing calls. I think we can all say very honestly in this House that we all wish to be free from annoying telemarketing calls. Unfortunately, because we're involved in politics, I'm quite sure that our numbers are on someone's party list and we're probably getting some annoying calls as we head into an election season as well.

But in all seriousness, I wish to thank the member for bringing forward something that obviously reflects his deeply held desire to serve the constituents of his riding and also promote the best interests of all Ontarians. I commend him for that.

At the same time, I do want to bring forward a couple of concerns that I have surrounding this bill. Unfortunately, from my perspective and some of the perspectives that I've had the opportunity to have conversations about with this legislation, I am concerned that it might be a bit superfluous. What I mean by that is that the reality is, we already have the CRTC framework, which applies federally, across the country, where duplicating that CRTC code in this piece of legislation would really not have any impact on stopping the practice of annoying telemarketing calls or stopping the practice of invasions of privacy through these unsolicited phone calls.

I'm concerned. Again, I have an open mind on this, and I look forward to listening to more of the speeches and debate on this bill, but I'm concerned that it might just be more red tape without additional consumer protection. That's a concern that we have to be wary of. We have to make sure that we're not simply creating greater barriers for those who may have a valid concern with this legislation. Of course, regulation and red tape seem to be a favourite habit of this government—increasing overregulation.

Mr. Bill Walker: What government? The Liberal government?

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: The Liberal government.

I want to make sure that this bill is not in that vein, that this bill actually serves a very practical purpose.

The federal telecommunications regulator already does run a national do-not-contact list and enforces the rules against the violators of the unsolicited communications rule. So I do think the Ontario government should, not only with this legislation but moving forward, promote the National Do Not Call List and educate consumers about the best answer to give to a marketing cold call, i.e., "Please put me and this number on your do-not-contact list. Have a nice day," the end.

We should let the CRTC do its job. This government, provincially, should be promoting the job that the CRTC does, instead of spending on government advertising

promoting themselves rather than informing Ontarians. I think this raises a very important conversation about promoting the government's use of taxpayer dollars to actually inform Ontarians about the rights that they have when it comes to unsolicited phone calls.

I look forward to hearing the continuance of debate on this issue, and I thank the member for bringing it forward.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to join the debate today on this last day of this session of the Legislature.

Applause.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Some people are very happy.

I do want to commend the member for bringing forward this PMB. It does build on a previous consumer protection bill that he also tabled last year with regard to door-to-door sales.

Obviously, the underlying motivation is to protect consumers. There's no doubt that telemarketing is a growing issue, with some predatory practices that are not unique to his riding but across the province. I think that the nature of telemarketing, actually, needs to be addressed here today.

Everyone may remember—I may be dating myself—that when telemarketing became a huge issue, there was a Seinfeld episode where Jerry Seinfeld picks up, responds to a telemarketer and then he asks the telemarketer for his personal number and an inconvenient time when he can call him. So it was made light of, in that sense. But the nature of telemarketing, I think—the aggressiveness and assertiveness of this practice—has actually grown.

I was in my riding knocking on doors a couple of weeks ago and one particular senior did invite me into her home. She was lonely. We were talking about her hydro bill and what have you. She did tell me that she is continually being harassed on the phone.

The phone has become an enemy for her because it wasn't just ducts; it was a number of things that she was being harassed about. I feel that it was very intentional and very purposeful. As happens when you go through the neighbourhood and knock on doors, you actually pick up cases, and so we're actually trying to help this particular senior with this particular issue. But there's no doubt that she's being targeted and so she needs protection. I was happy to be there on that particular day.

The issue of telemarketing fraud has become so pervasive that the Waterloo region police and other police forces across the province have tapped into this need to inform and educate citizens. The Waterloo region police, actually, have right up on their website "what is fraudulent telemarketing," just in case you didn't know, and "common signs of telemarketing fraud."

Then there are some common themes: There's the prize scam; there's the vacation scam; there's the charity scam; there's the fair hydro scam; there's the—nobody left? Anyway, there's obviously a long-standing issue that is actually taking a lot of police resources to deal with this phenomenon everywhere across the province.

Just as recently as this February, in the Hamilton Spectator there was this article called "A Super Hero in the Battle Against Telemarketers."

"Roger Anderson is a consultant who works on phone systems, setting up phone lines for companies and the kind of networks that ask you to press" 1 or 2 for whatever. "He loves telephones...."

"But by night, he wages battles against evil telemarketers, tweaking and honing a robot that can talk endlessly to telemarketers."

It's the same principle as Jerry Seinfeld, that there is actually a computer app now to filibuster a telemarketer. There are some creative options out there.

I do think, though, that it warrants our attention provincially. The issue of the CRTC has come up, because it is true that this is fundamentally federally regulated and so there's really only so much we can do as provincial legislators on this issue, but it doesn't mean that we should do nothing. We should definitely do something.

But the CRTC has fined five telemarketing firms \$634,000. This was just from March 10, 2016, from the Waterloo Region Record. It says that "Canada's broadcast regulator has ordered penalties totalling \$643,500 against five companies for violating telemarketing rules after an investigation in which it entered and searched a company's headquarters for the first time." The CRTC are doing their part. I don't think that they are actually, in full, responding to the severity and the emerging predatory practices that are out there.

I think that my colleague from Bramalea-Gore-Malton also raised an interesting issue: that it isn't the actual workers in these call centres; this is the directive of their employer, to embrace these tactics. Ultimately, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure that the employees are not breaking the law. We need a law to make sure that that is very clear to those employers.

Of course, we will be supporting this direction and hope that this measure will, in fact, protect some consumers across the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Mike Colle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Tracy MacCharles: Mrs. Speaker.

Mr. Mike Colle: Madam Speaker. It's habit after 22 years. It's good to see you there, Madam Speaker.

The interesting thing about this debate, as members were speaking, is that I was thinking that one of the reasons a lot of people are getting rid of land lines is because it seems that if you have a land line, it's almost a tool for telemarketers. Many people have said to me, "I don't want a land line because all it's good for is telemarketers, so therefore I'm getting rid of my land line." I don't know if that helps, but that's what some people are doing.

The constant haranguing by these companies is quite alarming, because it's not just your fly-by-night companies. This is, I think, international criminal fraud. These companies are not just little outfits in boiler rooms,

as they used to be. I found this out when I was trying to help some people with the Canada Revenue Agency scam, where people across Canada were being phoned non-stop and being told that they hadn't paid their tax bill and that if they didn't pay their tax bill, they would be arrested. We had cases—I remember talking to the RCMP about this—of elderly people going to the police station and saying, "Arrest me. I was told that I had violated the Criminal Code or something." So this is how serious it is.

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These companies are multinational. They're based in India, the Philippines, the United States, the Cayman Islands. They make hundreds of millions of dollars through criminal fraud. So it is not just the people who are hustling duct cleaning; it's very sophisticated, multi-faceted.

As the member from Kitchener said, there are not enough resources federally or provincially to deal with this international criminal fraud that's taking place.

As Minister MacCharles said, it targets seniors. As soon as they find out you're a senior—they go after the seniors and they're relentless, to the point where the seniors don't enjoy the comfort of their home, never mind their phone.

Then you have the half of the Ontario population who doesn't have English as a first language. They are taken advantage of on a regular basis by these fraudsters.

So I commend the member for bringing this forward to try to do something to get rid of some of these companies that take advantage of people. I think it is a very aggressive and a very important step to take. They think—again, I remember talking to the RCMP—that Canada is an easy mark for these scammers. That's the word: "In Canada, we can do it, and there are no repercussions." So I think we've got to take tougher measures to protect our citizens, whether it be provincially or federally. We just can't think that this is a marginal activity. It's serious, organized, international criminal fraud that the member is trying to address in his way.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Robert Bailey: I'm pleased to join the debate today on Bill 137, the Stop the Calls Act. I'd like to acknowledge the member from Etobicoke Centre for bringing forward this important private member's bill.

As we've heard from a number of speakers, the act establishes a prohibition for unsolicited phone calls for the purpose of selling, leasing, renting or advertising prescribed products or services.

I think the intent of this legislation is something that my constituents would want to see approved, so I'd like to see it moved to second reading so there can be a closer examination at committee. I certainly think there could be some fine tuning of the bill and would like to see that at the committee stage.

My office receives calls from constituents about suspicious phone calls all the time. I've advised on my social media accounts and in my weekly columns that if

constituents receive a suspicious call, they should call my staff, and we will help to determine if it's legitimate or not.

In fact, both my Queen's Park office and my constituency office have recently received phone calls from callers claiming to be from the Canada Revenue Agency. Of course, they requested credit card and bank account information. Unfortunately, all too often, because of the aggressive and deceptive tactics of these con artists, good people are being scammed out of thousands and thousands of dollars. I'm hopeful that this bill will help put an end to that, but I'm worried that catching up to international fraudsters might be outside the scope of what we can do. If someone is determined to steal and defraud and they're operating from somewhere offshore, using modern technology, is there a realistic chance that we can do anything to put a stop to it? But this is certainly something that I would like to see discussed further at committee.

Thank you again to the member from Etobicoke Centre for bringing the issue forward for consideration. I look forward to hearing more about it and learning how much of an impact the member thinks this can make, and learning how the member sees enforcement of the bill playing out. I think these will all be important points for consideration.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for the opportunity to participate.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure to speak to my colleague's private member's bill to ban telemarketing practices in the province of Ontario.

As I was listening to the debate and listening to the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, I did want to say to him that the do-not-call lists do not always work. We can see that. There's a certain threshold under which complaints are taken.

The measures in this bill, what they do is they create really what I would describe as—and I think my colleague would agree—a serious financial disincentive to go into that kind of practice. I know the member has done similar work around door-to-door sales, which you can draw an analogy to, and that seems to be the most effective way to attack this problem, especially when it's not a problem that's going to reach the kind of threshold where the CRTC is going to actually take some action.

It can be specific to industry. Look, we all have gotten these calls. We all know of seniors in our ridings who have felt pressured and who have signed contracts. Telemarketing and these kinds of marketing—you can't stop somebody from knocking on the door or calling you, but you can make it financially disadvantageous to engage in that activity.

I want to congratulate my colleague for putting this forward. I think it follows on in the work that he has done previously around door-to-door sales. I'm very pleased to support this bill and my colleague.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Granville Anderson: I thank the member from Etobicoke Centre for his ongoing advocacy on this very important matter.

I am pleased to rise in the Legislature today to speak to the proposed Stop the Calls Act. I know first-hand from my riding in Durham that this has been a problem. It has been a problem for me, as well, Madam Speaker. It's so pronounced that these calls come in—it doesn't matter whether it's a holiday or it's a long weekend or what time of the night it is. I think it's strategically done to catch you off-guard or half asleep, and you feel compelled to say yes to something that you really don't want or something that you really, really, really shouldn't be getting into.

A constituent of mine came in last spring; I knew the family. The husband passed away. He was a police officer, so he was pretty astute and would not have signed something if he was in his right mind. He was dying from cancer at the time, Madam Speaker. He was a senior, as well, and he passed away. After he passed away, his wife found that he had signed up for a water heater. She came into my office for help, but unfortunately the contract was so structured that we tried but we weren't able to get her out of the contract, so she paid it.

It's a problem. It's a problem especially in Ontario, with our aging population. In my riding, I probably have 25% or 30% of my constituents who are seniors, and they're the ones who are more susceptible to this. They're not the only ones, but they are more susceptible than us who are a little bit younger. They need that extra protection.

This, unfortunately, isn't going to stop the calls, but it will mitigate some of the damages after the call is made and it will allow someone who signed something that wasn't solicited to get out of a contract, and rightly so. That's fair, and I think that's reasonable.

This bill by my colleague is very well thought out, very reasoned. As you know, he was the one who instituted Bill 59 that spoke about door-to-door sales; that was part of his doing. He brought this to the forefront as well. He's always advocating on behalf of consumers in this province. That's wonderful, Madam Speaker, and he should be commended for doing this.

I am encouraging all my colleagues in the House to support this bit of legislation, because it's a good piece of legislation that's going to benefit Ontarians, and it's going to benefit people in my riding and people across this province in general.

Again, I hope this bill will have unanimous support from all members of this House.

1530

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I return to the member from Etobicoke Centre to wrap up.

Mr. Yvan Baker: I'd like to thank all of the members who spoke to the legislation, for their thoughtful input and ideas.

There are a few points that were raised that I was hoping to address. One was the issue around the need for education. I know that Minister MacCharles is here with

us and spoke to the bill, and the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services does a tremendous amount around consumer education, so that consumers can protect themselves from scams, whether it be over the phone, or door to door, or any other kind.

One of the challenges with this is that no matter how much education you do, that's not going to stop the phone from ringing. The phone calls are going to continue to come in. What I'm trying to do is make sure that we stop the harassment of consumers over and over again. Education is helpful to protect people from scams, but it won't stop the phone from ringing. I think this bill will help stop the phone from ringing.

The second piece that was raised was that the federal government is already tackling this issue and is responsible for this. I think the member for Ottawa South spoke to this quite thoughtfully. But the federal government regulates the kinds of phone calls that can come in.

There is a do-not-call list and people can sign up if they don't want to receive telemarketing calls. But as the member for Ottawa South said, the do-not-call list does not work very well. It works in some cases, selectively, but telemarketing firms seem to be ignoring that list. Part of the problem is that the CRTC, notwithstanding some good effort on their part, is struggling to enforce the do-not-call list, in part because a lot of the telemarketers aren't even based in Canada. But they also won't even investigate, they've said, unless they get at least a complaint a day about a specific caller. That means that a lot of telemarketing firms don't even meet the threshold to be investigated in the first place. That's why the federal do-not-call list isn't fully working and protecting consumers from these calls.

Therefore, what this bill does is provide that financial disincentive that will stop telemarketing firms from calling, because they can't make money making those calls to consumers.

As I've said, this is a bill that I think will protect consumers. I've heard from too many who get those harassing phone calls. It's time to stop the calls to consumers. I think this bill will do just that.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We will vote on this item at the end of private members' public business.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario should commit to equitable access to universal health care for northern Ontarians, particularly those living in underserved communities, by expanding the Northern Health Travel Grant Program to include:

—all OHIP-insured services not available within 100 kilometres of a patient's area of residence on referral from a health care or dental practitioner, thereby eliminating the current restriction to services performed by a specialist or in hospital;

—the broadening of eligible service locations to include out-of-province facilities, so that patients have

the option to access grant-covered services in locations closer to their place of residence, or for the purpose of accessing OHIP-insured services that are not offered or available in Ontario;

—increasing the accommodation allowance for grant-eligible patients to reflect the average cost of accommodation in the host community and adjusting the allowance on an annual basis to reflect market changes;

—eliminating barriers related to program application, including modifications to the application process to allow for minor revisions and submission of missing information via electronic means such as facsimile or email; and

—improving processing times by instituting a maximum time frame for the ministry to complete its review of a Northern Health Travel Grant application.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. Campbell has moved private member's notice of motion number 60. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: It is an honour to rise and debate this motion, which seeks to make changes to the Northern Health Travel Grant Program so that northerners living in underserved communities can have equitable access to universal health care.

Northerners know and understand that all specialty health care services are not available and not offered in every small community, and that in the north, health care services are often delivered on a regional basis. We do not expect the exact same access as afforded to Ontarians who live in the densely populated south, but we ask for equitable service—that is, fair access to health care services as afforded to all Ontarians through universal health care.

A fundamental tenet of equality of access means that no person should be refused health care based on their ability to pay. But in Ontario's north, where people must often travel hundreds of kilometres and incur significant expenses related to accessing health services, many are forced to go without medically necessary care. Between the mortgage, the hydro bill and food, there isn't much, if anything, left over, and the program that is designed to help offset the regional disparities and associated costs of accessing health care is not fulfilling its mandate.

Over the past few years, my constituency offices have been receiving more and more complaints about the program being too restrictive in terms of the eligible services and locations, the unrealistic accommodation allowance, and having too many application barriers, among other things. There are so many stories from my constituents that they have shared with me which underscore the need for change. I will share a few of those stories with this House in my brief time this afternoon to illustrate the importance of the changes I'm seeking today.

Many northerners mistakenly believe that, if their doctor determines that medical care is required which isn't available within their home community, their travel will be covered under the Northern Health Travel Grant

Program, but this is not the case. Presently under the program, if northerners are referred to either Thunder Bay or Winnipeg to receive OHIP-insured care, only some services are eligible for a travel grant. Having the visit or procedure covered by OHIP is no guarantee of travel assistance.

Recently, a hardworking single mother in Dryden who works at Walmart and who is barely making ends meet took her son to the dentist to have some dental work performed. The dentist informed her that the required work could not be performed in Dryden and that she would have to take her son to Winnipeg. She was told by her dentist that this trip would qualify them for a Northern Health Travel Grant because the care is not provided in Dryden and because the service would be performed by a specialist in a hospital.

Despite the fact that medically necessary, OHIP-insured service was performed in a hospital by a specialist, the travel grant was denied by the ministry because the doctor who performed the procedure is a children's dentist and not a dental or oral surgeon. This technicality does nothing to help this mother, who is without the financial means to travel hundreds of kilometres and who is without a say on where her child is referred by the medical practitioner. The government has put this mother, who is trying to look after the health of her child, in an impossible situation where she's trying to give her son the care that he needs but is without the financial means to incur travel-related expenses, including ground transportation, overnight accommodation and meals, to access a service that the majority of Ontarians can access locally and take for granted.

A senior citizen in my riding who has required opiates for many years to manage severe pain caused by two separate health conditions is now experiencing resulting liver problems. Her physician referred her to the only clinic within a 1,000-kilometre radius for medical marijuana treatment that will assist her with the pain while she is weaned off opiates. The clinic, located in Thunder Bay, is a 700-kilometre return trip away, and the treatment requires a number of visits.

Her travel claim was rejected on account of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care not recognizing it as a designated health facility. She approached my office because her small pension does not allow her the luxury of travelling to Thunder Bay and staying in hotels on a regular basis in order to go for treatment. She told me that the government is making her choose between eating and receiving the care that her doctor has prescribed.

In another case, a Sioux Lookout woman with diabetes and severe associated foot problems was sent to the orthopaedic clinic at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg to see her doctor, who specializes in foot care, for frequent and ongoing treatments. Although this physician operates in a hospital and only treats patients with diabetes-related foot issues, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care does not recognize him as a specialist

and has consequently denied this woman's travel grant claims. She still has to make several more trips but does not have the money to go. If she doesn't go, she will lose at least one foot.

These technicalities are arbitrary, wrong and not consistent with universal health care. It's abhorrent that people should be put in a position where they may have to go without medical treatment because they cannot afford to travel to their medical appointments. It also does not make sense and, in fact, I dare say that it's even cruel that the government would refuse to defray the relatively minimal cost associated with medically necessary travel for early treatment, but would fully fund the significantly more expensive and catastrophic resulting amputation—a consequence of non-treatment. It becomes unconscionable when one considers the statistics around amputations, which reveal terrible patient health outcomes and which precede either another amputation or death within five years of the first amputation.

For northerners whose OHIP-insured care is performed by a specialist in a hospital setting, there is still the issue of restricted service locations. Presently patients are only eligible for grants if the procedures are performed in Ontario or by the nearest medical specialist in Manitoba, often located in Winnipeg. But with long wait times for some procedures in Winnipeg, patients have turned to smaller nearby centres for faster care.

1540

Such is the case for a gentleman in Kenora who required shoulder surgery following a motor vehicle accident. In this particular case, the wait in Winnipeg was significantly longer than the waits in both Thunder Bay and Winkler, Manitoba. Being that Kenora is located significantly closer to Winkler, which amounts to a day trip, rather than Thunder Bay, which is further away by about 300 kilometres, round-trip, and would have required an overnight stay in a hotel, the gentleman had the procedure performed in Winkler.

This saved the government the mileage of about 1,500 kilometres as well as \$470 in overnight accommodations for the five trips that were required for his treatment. But rather than look at the bigger picture of the improved patient outcome of accessing the surgery faster and of saving money on mileage and accommodation costs for each of the five trips, the government penalized this gentleman for accessing care in a community that is closer than the nearest Ontario location and refused to compensate his mileage for the modest distance increase between Winnipeg and Winkler. The increase in the cost of the travel grant is insignificant for the government, but it makes a big impact on this senior's personal finances.

Another travel grant claim was denied to a northern patient who had a double mastectomy with a male chest reconstruction as part of gender reassignment surgery. It appears that in this case, the travel grant was denied on the basis that the procedure was performed in a location other than Ontario or Manitoba, despite Montreal having the nearest specialist clinic.

The Northern Health Travel Grant Program should allow northerners to have access to more out-of-province facilities so that patients have the option to access grant-eligible services in locations closer to their place of residence or for the purpose of accessing OHIP-insured services that are not offered or available in Ontario.

In terms of accommodation compensation, while the Liberals recently made changes in the 2017 budget to allow compensation of more than one night, the accommodation rate remains unrealistically low at \$100. A person is hard-pressed to find a place to stay in larger centres where patients are often referred, such as Winnipeg or Toronto, for \$100 a night. I understand that the intent of this program is to help defray the costs associated with travel to medical appointments, but there are so many other costly out-of-pocket expenditures, like food and other medical or personal expenses, that to not compensate patients for realistic accommodation costs is doubly punitive. It is for this reason that I believe the maximum eligible accommodation rate should be set at the average nightly cost per community and should be recalculated on an annual basis.

In order for the Northern Health Travel Grant Program to be effective, it needs to be easier to access. There are many rules that are outdated or needlessly cumbersome which result in barriers to access, such as only allowing one travel grant application per envelope or the complete rejection of an application based on one missed check box. When a check box is overlooked, the entire travel grant is returned by mail to the applicant, and the original grant must be altered and mailed back to Sudbury. Presently, minor revisions cannot be made by electronic means such as by fax or email, resulting in delays of months for a single travel grant.

Other rules, such as only allowing a single travel grant application per envelope, seem needlessly bureaucratic. While the processing times have decreased over the past few years and grants can be approved in as short as six to eight weeks, it can also take as long as six months. Approvals can take a very long time to process, and as I mentioned, even if there's a very small clerical error—sometimes that's not even a mistake on the part of the patient; sometimes specialists who are going through these things are going through them so quickly that they just overlook it—patients who have to go back and forth for a number of treatments can be left without the money to continue on to pursue their treatment.

Before I close, I'd be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the former member of provincial Parliament for Port Arthur, New Democrat Jim Foulds, for his vision and tenacity. This program has been instrumental in increasing northerners' access to medically necessary care since it was created in 1985. We would not be here discussing these modest reforms if it had not been for his work. On behalf of all northerners, I thank him.

I tried as best as I could to relay to this House the real hardships my constituents face when accessing health care in the north, but I was only allotted so much time. I hope these stories, all taken from recent experiences

relayed to my office over the past couple of months, have helped the other members of this House to understand the need for the specific reforms I've presented today.

The Northern Health Travel Grant program is intended to defray the costs northerners incur when accessing OHIP-insured health care services that Ontarians in other parts of the province do not have to spend when accessing care. The program serves as a lifeline to many northerners, making the effective coverage and implementation of this program key to ensuring that all Ontarians, regardless of postal code, have equitable access to health care.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Fraser: It's a pleasure to speak to the motion put forward by the member from Kenora—Rainy River. I want to thank her for putting forward this motion. As I said earlier in the comments with regard to the motion from the member from Simcoe—Grey, I know every member, in their community, advocates for those health care needs of the people who live there, and that's what our job is.

Again, to repeat myself and repeat the comments I made in reference to the motion from the member from Simcoe—Grey, there are a lot of choices, and each party at times has had to make choices inside the health care system about how we were going to allocate money, what some of the rules were around doing that, and those are all difficult choices. We have to be very careful to ensure that we invest the money in a way that is going to be most effective.

When I hear some of the stories mentioned by the member from Kenora—Rainy River—and I hope that as they've come forward, I'm sure she has brought them forward to the ministry. Some of those things that you hear are not the intent of what the northern travel grant means, I believe. I'm sure the member has done that. I know in the last budget that we increased from about \$44 million to \$54 million the money for the northern travel grants. That's a significant increase of about 20%. I think that will go a long way to addressing some of the issues the member opposite has raised.

I think this budget, from a health care perspective, was an exceptionally strong budget. We had measures mentioned earlier today about extra investments in operating funds for hospitals. What that meant for northern hospitals is about \$30 million additionally in this year. There's also an extra \$9 billion over the next 10 years invested in health care capital. That makes \$20 billion over the next 10 years. That's another historic investment.

Another thing I think that is critical—and actually the most critical thing in the budget—is OHIP+. That's pharmacare for children and youth. If you're under 25 after January 1 and you go to the pharmacist with a prescription, all you need is your OHIP card and you'll leave—no deductible, no copayment. I think this is going to be exceptionally important for Ontario families. It's

going to reduce the burden and ensure that children and youth have access to those medications.

I don't think we can stop there, and I don't think any of us thinks we can. We need to have a partnership with the other provinces and territories and the national government, our federal government, to get to universal pharmacare. There's no question that that is where we need to be, and that measure in this budget is critical in making sure that we get ourselves to universal pharmacare here in Canada.

Again, I want to thank the member opposite for putting the motion forward. It's important that all of us advocate for those needs that are in our communities, whether they be a need that we can generalize, say, or a specific need, especially a specific need for a constituent who is maybe having a difficult time connecting with the health care system in whatever way. That's our job; that's what we do. I want to commend the member for bringing that forward, and thank you very much for this time, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Bill Walker: It's a pleasure to rise and speak to the bill by my colleague from the north. I noted in some of the first information they shared that one of her biggest concerns was certainly about travel and the challenge and the burden that gives particularly people in the Far North. I want to just share that our member from Nipissing, Vic Fedeli, from almost day one in here, has been very concerned that the Liberal government of today cut the Ontario Northlander train service, which made it exceedingly difficult for people in the north to access health care in a timely manner.

1550

I want to note that Gracín here, from Perth—Wellington, has been an exceptional page, as all of the pages have, and we're going to be sad to see them go. One of the reasons we stand here and fight so much is so that they have health care in the generations to come. We worry about the debt this government is loading on to people like our great pages and how they will ever pay that back.

But I digress, and I will go back to the bill.

Where I serve, Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, is certainly not anywhere close to the extremes of the Far North, but I want to tell you that there are a lot of similarities. Certainly, a number of years ago, my predecessor, Bill Murdoch, from the great riding of Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound—and others as well, but certainly Bill—tried to introduce some opportunity for us to be given the northern designation because we're caught in the middle. We don't get some of the other things the Far North does as far as funding, and yet we're saddled with challenges because we're a bit closer.

They sought an amendment to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Act to designate the Bruce Peninsula, including Wiarton, as part of northern Ontario, making it eligible for extra funding. The idea was to allow these communities access to programs and funding assistance

in areas of health care, which she is speaking about, and economic development and education. They argued, and rightfully so, that they shared the same northern geographic characteristics and challenges as Parry Sound—Muskoka, my good colleague Norm Miller's riding. Lion's Head is actually on the same latitude as Parry Sound—Parry Sound, of course, is the home of one of my hockey heroes, Bobby Orr. Namely, an aging population, declining youth opportunities and a lack of commercial and industrial assessment were some of the reasons.

That was denied. People keep coming and asking me if we can do that and we, of course, still try, through channels here, to make that happen, but at this point it has not.

We share some of those things of being an underserved community. An underserved community is where access to health care is limited, which most of the time refers to our rural and remote communities in Ontario. Certainly, the north has even more challenges than we do. Access to doctors and mental health and addiction service continues to be a struggle in Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound. As of today, some 1,500 constituents in my riding continue to go without access to a primary physician. Likewise, we're starting to hear more alarms from the medical community over the lack of access to mental health and addiction services in Grey and Bruce.

Dr. Susan Boron of Hanover and District Hospital has said that we're in dire straits, while the president and CEO of the South Bruce Grey Health Centre, Paul Rosebush, has called it a crisis. The lack of mental health resources in Grey-Bruce is beginning to take its toll.

Local hospitals in the area are not prepared to deal with suicidal teens, people diagnosed with schizophrenia and individuals who pose a threat to themselves or others. So what are they forced to do? Hanover and District Hospital has had to resort to contracting police officers, at a great cost, to watch over some of these patients, while staff struggle to find an available bed somewhere in the catchment area. Not only is it the cost but it's the challenge. That officer knows that they're not specially trained to help the person they've been called to help, and that's challenging for the person who is in dire straits and needing that help, because they also know that police officer may not have the skills that are needed. We currently have 440 psychiatric beds in the South West LHIN—clearly not enough. The ministry has been aware of the bed capacity problem for a few years, yet beds were not added.

I was being a little bit humorous when I spoke about the debt and the concerns, but I'm very sincere and serious. Very similar to the member from the north, every dollar that we waste, every dollar that goes to scandal, corruption and mismanagement, every dollar that we actually have to go and borrow takes away from our very valued health care services. We have to ensure that at the end of the day, we're putting all that money to the front lines of care. We have to ensure that we are going to definitely deliver in a timely manner.

When I see things like the travel of 100 kilometres, it brings me back again to a subject I've talked about here an inordinate amount of time, because I still don't think the Liberals are listening: closing our rural schools. Kids will be on the bus, in some cases, for 60 and 80 kilometres. They'll be on a bus for an hour and a half. It's not good for our children. It's not good, no matter what they say, for the education of our youth, and it certainly isn't good for the health of our communities.

When I look at a bill like this, I certainly try to understand and empathize with the member, because of the geography she has. A riding like Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound is still a large geographic area, with a very sparse population. What we need to do is ensure that people in those sparse-population areas have the ability to have the services that they deserve.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Gilles Bisson: I congratulate my colleague from Kenora—Rainy River for bringing this motion forward, because certainly as northerners we all understand what the issue is.

For a lot of people who don't live in rural and northern Ontario, you take for granted that if you're sick, there's going to be a health care facility or a specialist nearby to care for you. If you live anywhere in the GTHA, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa or any of those places, if you are unfortunate enough to get sick, there's a hospital nearby; there's a clinic; there are specialists. You can leave your home, do what you've got to do and be back home for supper. There's nothing wrong with that; that's just the way it is.

But the reality is that for many people in places like northern Ontario and other parts of rural Ontario, that is not the case. Specifically, for northern Ontario, it certainly isn't the case. You can live in probably 90% of our communities in northern Ontario, and you're an overnight stay for any type of medical treatment because you have to drive three, four, five, eight hours to get to a health care facility or a specialist to be able to get those services.

Now, the health travel grant, as my friend said, was a thing that the NDP had pushed years ago in opposition. I had forgotten. It was actually Iain Angus who was one of the guys who—was it Iain Angus or was it Foulds?

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Jim Foulds.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: It was Foulds, eh? He pushed in order to get the northern travel grant, and eventually did. If I remember correctly—was that part of the accord or was that prior to that? It was during the minority Parliament of the Davis government back in the late 1970s, I believe.

But the point is, that was a good thing. The unfortunate reality is that the program over the years has not kept pace with what the realities are for northerners when it comes to accessing services. I'd just talk about people where I come from. If you live in Hearst and you have to get down to Timmins or Sudbury or Ottawa, depending

on the referral, in every case it's an overnight stay. And unfortunately, the amount of money that we pay for people for accommodation certainly doesn't cover the hotel room in any of those communities when it comes to finding a hotel to be able to stay overnight to go for your MRI or whatever procedure you've been referred to.

The unfortunate reality is—and the member spoke to that—as we all know, in our ridings it's no different than anywhere else: There are a lot of people that don't make a lot of money, and they don't have \$100 in disposable income at the end of the month to spend on anything. So if you have to go from Hearst and do an overnight in Timmins or Ottawa or Sudbury, by the time you check into your room, do a meal on the road to get there, and have a meal at suppertime, breakfast and a meal on the way back, you're well over \$200—I would say probably closer to \$250—just to do that.

We all know of people in our constituencies who can't afford to go do the referral, so they stay home. Unfortunately what happens is that the person gets sicker and sicker and the government pays for it in the end, because they end up at L'hôpital Notre-Dame or Sensenbrenner or whatever the hospital facility is, in an acute situation, and they're flown by air ambulance to go somewhere else to get the treatment. If they would have gotten their darn travel grant increased and the cost of accommodation covered, the person probably would have gone for the treatment that they needed, which could have prevented them from becoming more acute and then essentially costing the system far more money.

This is a question where we're biting off our nose to spite our face. If we don't invest in making sure that people have the ability to access health care at the early stages of disease, we're going to pay for it a heck of a lot more as the person gets sicker and sicker and eventually becomes acute—and in some cases dies, which is the worst sort of outcome. That we can all agree on.

The member is trying to do what a lot of northerners have been asking for for a long time, which is to make sure that the travel grant is realistic to the reality of people when it comes to being able to travel. It's not just a question of the mileage on the travel grant, which is helpful, but doesn't cover the full cost of travel in some cases, because especially if you have to fly to Sudbury on Bearskin Airlines or you have to fly to Toronto or Ottawa on Porter or Air Canada, it doesn't cover those types of costs, and in some cases that's the only choice you've got. You don't drive, and you can't be on the bus because you're too sick to do the 10-hour drive down to Toronto or 12-hour drive down to Ottawa, so you need to take a flight. The person says, "Well, I can't afford that. I'm not going."

What we're trying to do is to make sure that we give people the ability to have the equal amount of access that people in large centres have when it comes to accessing health care services for their medical conditions. One of the hindrances to doing that is not being able to afford to travel.

1600

I will support the motion on the basis of fairness for all northerners and people who live in rural Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: This is a good motion, and I'm certainly happy to speak to it. Yesterday, in my question to the Minister of Health about the transfer of long-term beds out of my riding, I quoted the 2002 Romanow report. I'd like to read that quote again: "People in rural communities have poorer health status and greater needs for primary health care, yet they are not as well served and have more difficulty accessing health care services than people in urban centres."

This is especially true for people living in northern Ontario, where they simply don't have access to the same health care services and facilities that we often take for granted. That's why, for many years, the Northern Health Travel Grants program has existed to help improve access. And yet, as my honourable colleague from Kenora-Rainy River points out, there are gaps in the current program. It can certainly be improved.

There are really two elements that this motion would tackle. The first is improving access directly by, for example, allowing people to get OHIP services at an out-of-province facility if it's located closer to home. Just a few blocks from Queen's Park, we have many of the country's best hospitals and specialized treatment centres. For people living in rural and remote communities, coming to these facilities would be hugely expensive, possibly involving days of travel. Expanding the travel grant to cover services not available within 100 kilometres of a person's home would help level the playing field in this regard.

The second area that the motion addresses is making the program more administratively efficient. I am especially supportive of the idea of putting a service standard in place for processing applications. As critic for community and social services, I have seen first-hand the grief that unpredictable wait-lists can create for families trying to get care for their loved ones. It's a real problem in the areas of developmental services and long-term care.

I also think the proposal to let people make small changes to their applications online is very sensible. Something as basic as a missing address or telephone number shouldn't take weeks of bureaucratic paper-pushing to fix.

Mr. Speaker, this motion is not about extending health coverage or introducing new benefits; it simply aims to ensure that every Ontarian, regardless of where they live, has access to quality health care services when they need them.

I'd like to end with a quote from the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. He said this last year, when the government tabled its Patients First Act: "Ontario is committed to a health care system that truly puts patients first. This means faster access to primary care for patients

no matter where they live, and a system that will be there for generations to come.”

I urge the government to put their words into action and join in supporting this motion.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. John Vanthof: It is an honour to stand up today and support my colleague from Rainy River on her motion to review the travel grant and actually fix the areas where it is sorely lacking.

Sometimes, in my job, people who don't come from northern Ontario criticize: “What do you mean? A northern travel grant? What is that? A vacation?” Well, please come to northern Ontario—come live in Timiskaming—Cochrane, come live in Dryden—and experience the health care vacations that we get. What the Northern Health Travel Grants are for is to make sure that people—it's not that we're asking for equal access; we're asking for equitable access for people in northern Ontario to access the health care system.

Overall, if you give people throughout the province equitable access, you will actually save—I think there's a problem with the clock. I'm still on Tory time.

Interjections.

Mr. John Vanthof: Okay. I am getting the word to keep talking.

But overall, equitable access will definitely save the health care system money. Governments are worried about people, but they're also worried about finances. When you get people to health care quicker, they will have a better outcome. That's one thing that we were looking for.

On a personal basis, one of the issues that we face regularly is: People who have had a health care issue and they are referred to health care treatment in another part of the province just assume, because they've never dealt with this issue before, that they will be covered by the Northern Health Travel Grant—because they've got the signature and they've sent it away dutifully—and they are denied. Then we have to go through the process of trying to get that denial reversed, if possible. Or you will have a senior who will actually—people think that we are the recycling generation; most seniors are way more frugal than the current generation—put two grant applications in the same envelope. You'd think that is money-saving—no. Nada.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. Thank you—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Okay, three more minutes.

Mr. John Vanthof: Is that my time? Okay.

Interjections.

Mr. John Vanthof: All right. I'm getting the hook from the Speaker but the “keep going” from the table. Now I have totally lost my train of thought.

Mr. Gilles Bisson: You were talking about two envelopes.

Mr. John Vanthof: Right. Two forms, one envelope: no, can't do that.

Or someone who has gone through a health care crisis is filling out the travel grant and they forget to click one box or they forget a certain signature. You would think that that could be fixed in our electronic age, but no.

Maybe the folks at the Northern Health Travel Grant have figured out that most people in northern Ontario don't have Internet, but there are places available. This doesn't have to take weeks and months, because there are an awful lot of people in our ridings—it's the same in the GTA and southern Ontario, but in northern Ontario there are a lot of people who can't wait an extra three or four months to be reimbursed for that. Actually, the reimbursement is only half perhaps—or less than half—of what it actually costs.

These people are not travelling for recreation. I can assure you, Speaker, that no one in the province is out to scam the Northern Health Travel Grant; they're just not out there. This grant needs a review so people can have a chance to get equitable access to health care. It will not only make for a much better health care outcome for individuals, but much better efficiency for the province.

Specifically, to the member from Kenora—Rainy River, in her part of the world—people think that northern Ontario is all the same, and it isn't, because one issue that her area has to face is that a lot of the closest health care isn't in Ontario. That is something that this system has to come to grips with. Unless it does, people in the north will continue to be disadvantaged in health care.

If you look, there are recent studies that have come out—I can't remember the specific name of the study, but in the North East LHIN and the North West LHIN the health care outcomes are much lower, the life expectancy is lower—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Than Toronto.

Mr. John Vanthof: Yes. There are a lot of things. It didn't look good. Anything that we can do to help those expectancies get better is something that we, as legislators, have a duty to do. This isn't a partisan issue.

I'm not going to get into the issue about pharmacare-lite and real pharmacare—just thought I'd stick that in.

1610

This is about an individual who assumes—because they know the grant system is in place and they get health care in another area because they have been referred there, and they apply and they are denied, for no reason that makes any sense to the individual. That's why this is a great motion. It should prompt a review, an actual review, and action should be taken to make our health care system equitable across Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate? I recognize the member from Northumberland—Quinte West.

Hon. Jeff Leal: Hear, hear. The home of the Brighton Speedway.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Well, thank you. My biggest advocate here.

Thank you so much, Speaker, for allowing me a few minutes to talk about the proposed motion in front of us from MPP Campbell.

I represent a part of Ontario that's not northern Ontario—I get it—but eastern Ontario, outside the big centres. Yes, it's not University Avenue that we have here in Toronto when it comes to the delivery of all types of health care. I think we all accept that. I am also a strong believer that Ontarians and Canadians need access to health care to the best of our ability. I don't think there's anybody in this place that would argue with that—none whatsoever.

I think our government, in the past 13 years or so, has made some huge advances, and the fact that we're doing that—there's an enormous amount of investment in health care, in all sectors. Let me just, for example, point out that within the 2017 budget—which, by the way, both opposition parties voted against—hospitals in northern Ontario are receiving more than \$30 million. Do they need more? Do we need to invest more? Absolutely.

I would say that I think we need to work on this together. We need to support those things. But in just the last few hours, both opposition parties voted against a budget that has huge investments in health care.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Order. I want to remind members that there are those who have been warned already. You know who you are. It's never too late to name somebody at 4:15.

I'm going to return to the member for Northumberland—Quinte West.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Thank you for your intervention, Speaker, because obviously certain things—like I say, don't poke the bear. I think there are a few bears on the other side, as I speak here, that are reacting. I'm not surprised. I think, not too long ago, they had an opportunity to really help—and I'm not just saying government, as the Liberal government—

Hon. Jeff Leal: Help their communities.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Help their communities, Speaker. But it was pretty evident that it didn't happen. I know the member is asking for bigger investments. We know this. I know it's too late for them to turn the clock back and maybe change their minds on how to vote on the budget. But, Speaker, frankly, that's not going to happen.

I know that, for example, my good friend here, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, has been a strong advocate for health care in northern Ontario. I think, if I'm correct, and I stand to be corrected, that he had asked the minister for a \$10-million increase for northern communities. So I think we are all in this together, as I said a minute ago.

I will support this motion, because, with the intent that we all want to do better, we want to make sure that those people, when they are in need, have the health care that they deserve. So I am prepared to support this, but it saddens me that when the others had an opportunity to work with the government, to make some of these much-needed improvements, what did they do? They voted against the budget.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Further debate?

Mr. Jim McDonnell: I'm happy to rise and to comment on this bill from the member from Kenora—Rainy River on the state of health care in northern Ontario. I know that the special issues in the north, just because of where it is, make it much more difficult to get health care. Unfortunately, those same problems are right across—well, I shouldn't say rural Ontario, but all of Ontario.

The member opposite was talking about our voting against the budget. We voted against the budgetary practices of this government. How could you support them? They just froze health care for four years, for hospital funding, something that came out after the last election. I know the people of Ontario would like to turn the clock back and re-vote because a lot of information is out since the last election.

You talk about the problems with access within 100 kilometres. In my riding, I'm over 100 kilometres from where I live to the services in Ottawa. It's tough for people to make it those distances, especially when they are not feeling well from cancer treatments, for different things. Those services are not available anywhere but the larger centres, sometimes within those distances.

We look at improving wait times. The Auditor General reported, after we got up here, about, in my riding, the eastern Ontario LHIN having worst wait times in the province, waiting up to three years for a long-term-care bed. When you question the CCAC, their answer is, "Well, you've got more than you're supposed to have," almost double what we should have. You think, if our wait times are the worst and we have double the facilities, somebody is doing a terrible job, or maybe the numbers aren't right. But those are the numbers the government gives us.

If we look at the response—this past spring, the Toronto Star had a large exposé about the condition of our hospital in Cornwall: patients waiting a day in the hallways and offices on stretchers, because there are no beds funded to go to. This is about choices. The member from Ottawa South talked about tough choices. That's something this government can't seem to make. When it comes to saving their own skin or making choices—\$3 billion, we're finding out now, in the gas plants. We're talking about the fair hydro system—almost \$100 billion to defer rates.

Those are the types of decisions—if you're going to take that money and waste it, that money should go back to health care and education. Instead of closing schools in rural areas, we should be improving our health and education. This government—as the member said, there are tough choices, but they are unable to make them. I think we're paying for it, for sure.

Back to the north: I'm sure the problems they're having up there are even worse because of the distances they have. You can imagine, in this day and age, having to ask to make improvements when you talk about IT. When we look at some of the colossal failures of eHealth

and SAMS, it's little wonder they want to take on the fax machine. Sometimes, I think, for this government, that's a huge advancement.

We're looking at supporting this bill and I think it's time that we improved health care right across the province.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Thank you. I will return to the member from Kenora–Rainy River to wrap up.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: Thank you, Speaker. I want to thank the members from—

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Sorry, sorry. *Interjections.*

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: A point of order.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): My apologies. Further debate?

Hon. Bill Mauro: I'm glad to have three minutes or so to just speak to the motion that in fact was contained in the budget that the NDP just voted against. The motion is asking for equitable access for universal health care for northern Ontarians, especially those in underserved communities, by expanding the Northern Health Travel Grant program. Of course, as the member from Northumberland–Quinte West has just outlined, we had \$10 million added to increase the Northern Health Travel Grant that was contained in the budget that the NDP just voted against.

1620

I think the timing is obvious to all and interesting to all. For some reason, the member has decided that this is the appropriate time to come forward with not a private member's bill but a motion, trying to do something and, I suppose, maybe wash away the stain of having voted against a budget that contained a \$10-million increase on the very file that they're pretending to be in favour of. It's very big.

On the equitable access piece, I would add a few points, just for folks to understand. This has been a huge issue for me in Thunder Bay since I was elected in 2003 in my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan. We have made significant progress, I would say, when it comes to our communities, in terms of providing a broader range of services in Thunder Bay that did not exist before.

For about the last nine years in Thunder Bay, we have been providing angioplasty not only to Thunder Bay but to the region of Thunder Bay, where about 700 people every year, on average, now can receive angioplasty services in Thunder Bay. This represents thousands of people who do not have to travel to southern Ontario from points west and east of Thunder Bay; have their families with them; do not have to deal with the Northern Health Travel Grant; and get good, quality care right at home at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Additionally, just two weeks ago, the Minister of Health was in Thunder Bay to announce and celebrate the first vascular surgeries ever performed in the history of Thunder Bay—never before. Speaker, Thunder Bay and northwestern Ontario have some of the highest rates of amputations when it comes to the entire province. The

provision of vascular surgery is extremely important. We have now been providing vascular surgery out of Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre since around January or February of this year. We started with angioplasty, and we're now providing vascular surgery.

The big one yet to come is that this is a step in the right direction in terms of our partnership with the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre here in Toronto. Within the next two to three years in Thunder Bay, at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, you will be able to receive full cardiac surgery.

You want to talk about providing equitable access? There are not too many people in Thunder Bay who are of my vintage, who could have ever contemplated at some point that we might actually be able to receive full cardiac surgery in Thunder Bay—not only serving the people of Thunder Bay, but those from Kenora and east as far as it may go. For that whole district, when it comes to equitable access, I would say that we are moving the yardsticks forward significantly.

The Northern Health Travel Grant was in the budget—\$10 million. I spoke directly to the Minister of Health and asked him if there was some capacity for him to address this.

I take the point from the member of the official opposition: The distinctions between northern Ontario and southern Ontario are different; they're not the same. There is a very good, justifiable position for the Northern Health Travel Grant to be maintained and enhanced in the province of Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I will return to the member from Kenora–Rainy River to wrap up.

Ms. Sarah Campbell: I am almost at a loss as to how I could possibly address all of those falsehoods in two minutes. But I will try, nevertheless.

I can appreciate the fact that maybe the minister wasn't here for the bulk of my presentation, because he clearly wasn't paying attention to what we're discussing today. We are discussing making changes to the Northern Health Travel Grant Program. I did recognize that there were some very minuscule changes that were made by this government in the most recent provincial budget.

But we're talking about expanding the program to cover all OHIP-insured services, not just cherry-picking a few from the tree. We're talking about broadening the eligible services, increasing the accommodation allowance—not just having an extra night of stay, which is the only thing that was contained in that paltry budget—and also eliminating barriers to the program application.

What I find particularly troubling is that the minister himself touched on the crux of the problem. Thunder Bay has among the highest rates of amputations in the province. This is true. I addressed that in my remarks.

It is ludicrous that this government would sit back and watch people who have foot-related complications due to the high rates—the explosive rates—of diabetes that we have all across the north, and wait for them to fester, and underfund the Northern Health Travel Grant Program to

the point where people have no choice but to get an amputation.

If this government is truly concerned about bringing down the rates of amputations in the north, they will invest in preventive measures, like the Northern Health Travel Grant Program, and will not sit back and wait for people's health to be on the line.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): The time allocated for private members' public business has expired.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): We will deal first with ballot item number 61, standing in the name of Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson has moved private member's notice of motion number 43.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear "carried."

Motion agreed to.

STOP THE CALLS ACT, 2017 LOI DE 2017 SUR LES APPELS INDÉSIRABLES

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Baker has moved second reading of Bill 137, An Act to prohibit unsolicited phone calls for the purpose of selling, leasing, renting or advertising prescribed products or services.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear "carried."

Second reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I'm going to turn to the member from Etobicoke Centre to identify which committee.

Mr. Yvan Baker: Regulations and Private Bills, Madam Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Agreed? I hear "agreed." Congratulations.

NORTHERN HEALTH SERVICES

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Ms. Campbell has moved private member's notice of motion number 60.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I hear "carried."

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Point of order, Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to revert to motions, in order to put forward a motion with respect to Bill 148.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Agreed? I hear "agreed."

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: I move that the motion passed earlier today authorizing the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs to meet to consider Bill 148 be amended by deleting the words "Monday" and "Tuesday" in the first paragraph.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Naqvi has moved—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Dispense.

Do we agree? I hear "agreed."

Motion agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I recognize the member from Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale.

Mr. Ted McMeekin: I seek unanimous consent that the order of the House dated November 24, 2016, referring Bill 71, An Act to establish the Lung Health Advisory Council and develop a provincial action plan respecting lung disease, to the Standing Committee on Social Policy be discharged; and

That the order for third reading of the bill be immediately called; and

That the question on the motion for third reading be put without debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may not be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That in the case of any division related to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Can you send it forward with the page? Thank you.

Mr. McMeekin seeks unanimous consent that the order of the House—

Interjection: Dispense.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Dispense? Do I hear "dispense"?

Interjection: No, let's hear it again.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. McMeekin seeks unanimous consent that the order of the House dated November 24, 2016, referring Bill 71, An Act to establish the Lung Health Advisory Council and develop a provincial action plan respecting lung disease, to the Standing Committee on Social Policy be discharged; and

That the order for third reading of the bill be immediately called; and

That the question on the motion for third reading be put without debate or amendment; and

That the vote on third reading may not be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That in the case of any division related to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

Is there unanimous consent? I heard a no.

**BUDGET MEASURES ACT
(HOUSING PRICE STABILITY
AND ONTARIO SENIORS' PUBLIC
TRANSIT TAX CREDIT), 2017**

**LOI DE 2017 SUR LES MESURES
BUDGÉTAIRES (STABILITÉ DES PRIX
DU LOGEMENT ET CRÉDIT D'IMPÔT
DE L'ONTARIO AUX PERSONNES ÂGÉES
POUR LE TRANSPORT EN COMMUN)**

Mr. Naqvi, on behalf of Mr. Sousa, moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 134, An Act to implement 2017 Budget measures / Projet de loi 134, Loi mettant en oeuvre certaines mesures énoncées dans le Budget de 2017.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1630 to 1635.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Members, please take your seats.

Mr. Naqvi has moved Bill 134, An Act to implement 2017 Budget measures. All those in favour of the motion, please stand one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Berardinetti, Lorenzo
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Campbell, Sarah
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Colle, Mike

Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Fife, Catherine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel
Forster, Cindy
Fraser, John
Hatfield, Percy
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena

Mauro, Bill
McGarry, Kathryn
McMeekin, Ted
Milczyn, Peter Z.
Miller, Paul
Mori, Reza
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq

Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Des Rosiers, Nathalie
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe

Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
Leal, Jeff
MacCharles, Tracy
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Matthews, Deborah

Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Sousa, Charles
Thibeault, Glenn
Vanthof, John
Vernile, Daiene
Wynne, Kathleen O.
Zimmer, David

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): All those opposed to the motion, please rise and remain standing until recorded by the Clerk.

Nays

Arnott, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon
Coe, Lorne

Jones, Sylvia
Martow, Gila
McDonnell, Jim
Oosterhoff, Sam

Pettapiece, Randy
Walker, Bill
Wilson, Jim
Yurek, Jeff

The Clerk of the Assembly (Mr. Todd Decker): The ayes are 57; the nays are 12.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

Third reading agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Orders of the day.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Madam Speaker, first of all, I just want to wish all the members of this House a very restful summer.

I move adjournment of the House.

The Deputy Speaker (Ms. Soo Wong): Mr. Naqvi has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the wish of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

I believe the ayes have it. Carried.

I will adjourn the House until Monday, September 11, 2017, at 10:30 a.m.

Have a great summer.

The House adjourned at 1639.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO
ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffier: Todd Decker

Deputy Clerk / Sous-greffier: Trevor Day

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Tonia Grannum, Valerie Quioc Lim, William Short

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergente d'armes: Jacquelyn Gordon

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Hon. / L'hon. Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	Minister of Citizenship and Immigration / Ministre des Affaires civiques et de l'Immigration
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
Arnott, Ted (PC)	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
Ballard, Hon. / L'hon. Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	Minister of Housing / Ministre du Logement Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
Bradley, James J. (LIB)	St. Catharines	Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Brown, Patrick (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti progressiste-conservateur de l'Ontario
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Markham–Unionville	Minister of International Trade / Ministre du Commerce International
Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Infrastructure / Ministre de l'Infrastructure
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon (PC)	Scarborough–Rouge River	
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint de l'opposition officielle Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjoint de l'opposition officielle
Coe, Lorne (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism / Ministre délégué à l'Action contre le racisme
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Minister of Seniors Affairs / Ministre des Affaires des personnes âgées
Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)	Vaughan	Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Des Rosiers, Nathalie (LIB)	Ottawa–Vanier	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development and Growth / Ministre du Développement économique et de la Croissance
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	
Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Emie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)	Scarborough–Guildwood	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Hon. / L'hon. Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Minister Responsible for Small Business / Ministre responsable des Petites Entreprises
Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs Minister Responsible for Accessibility / Ministre responsable de l'Accessibilité
MacLaren, Jack (IND)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Chair of Cabinet / Présidente du Conseil des ministres Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister of Advanced Education and Skills Development / Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et de la Formation professionnelle Minister Responsible for Digital Government / Ministre responsable de l'Action pour un gouvernement numérique Minister of Municipal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires municipales
Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonnell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Hon. / L'hon. Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McMahon, Hon. / L'hon. Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton–Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research, Innovation and Science / Ministre de la Recherche, de l'Innovation et des Sciences
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Indira (LIB)	Halton	Minister of the Status of Women / Ministre de la condition féminine Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care / Ministre responsable de la Petite enfance et de la Garde d'enfants
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Attorney General / Procureur général Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brook	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint de parti reconnu
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Hon. / L'hon. Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation / Ministre des Relations avec les Autochtones et de la Réconciliation
Vacant	Sault Ste. Marie	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Michael Mantha
Bob Delaney, Cheri DiNovo
Joe Dickson, Michael Harris
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha
Peter Z. Milczyn, Arthur Potts
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Ann Hoggarth
Yvan Baker, Toby Barrett
Han Dong, Victor Fedeli
Ann Hoggarth, Harinder Malhi
Cristina Martins, Peter Z. Milczyn
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Granville Anderson
Granville Anderson, Yvan Baker
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Julia Munro
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

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Wayne Gates, Amrit Mangat
Cristina Martins, Sam Oosterhoff
Randy Pettapiece, Shafiq Qaadri
Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti
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Nathalie Des Rosiers, Jim McDonell
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri
Monique Taylor, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Christopher Tyrell

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Robert Bailey, James J. Bradley
Joe Dickson, Sophie Kiwala
Harinder Malhi, Michael Mantha
Monte McNaughton, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

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Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Randy Hillier, Monte Kwinter
Lisa MacLeod
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

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permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

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Jennifer K. French, Ted McMeekin
Lou Rinaldi, Mario Sergio
Bill Walker, Soo Wong
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Lorne Coe, Vic Dhillon
John Fraser, Amrit Mangat
Gila Martow, Ted McMeekin
Lou Rinaldi, Jagmeet Singh
Peter Tabuns
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Jocelyn McCauley